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Iran rebels say squads hunting Rushdie

LONDON (R) — An Iranian dissident group said Tuesday it had proof that the Tehran government had sent hit-squads to kill author Salman Rushdie and was behind attacks on his Italian and Japanese translators. The group said the hit-squads were sent to hunt down dissidents and people associated with Mr. Rushdie's book "The Satanic Verses," viewed by Tehran as blasphemous. A hit-squad arrived in Britain four months ago to carry out the death sentence on Mr. Rushdie imposed by the late Iranian leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the London spokesman for the Mujahadeen, Farzin Vashemi, told a news conference. Other teams had been sent to Italy, Japan, France, Switzerland, Germany, Canada, Germany and Algeria. Iran has denied Mujahadeen charges that it has ordered death squads into action against Mr. Rushdie and his colleagues. The Mujahadeen, which is bitterly opposed to the Iranian government, produced a tape of a telephone conversation about the hit-squads between a man they said was an aide to President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and another unidentified man.

Abdul Meguid arrives today

AMMAN (Petra) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid arrives in Amman Wednesday on a two-day visit to Jordan as part of a tour of several Arab countries. Dr. Abdul Meguid will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on the latest developments in the region and efforts aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem through peaceful means. The secretary general will also discuss in Amman the role of the league in improving Arab relations and handling rifts among Arab states following the Gulf crisis.

Israeli businessmen reject Arab boycott linkage

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli business leaders Tuesday rejected any link between a freeze on Jewish settlement of the occupied territories and a halt to the Arab economic boycott which has cost the Jewish state \$80 billion. Arab states led by Egypt this week backed proposals by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to link the two issues. "The boycott existed 20 years before there were settlements. The Western world is wrong in creating a linkage," Dan Gilerman, president of the Israel Chamber of Commerce, told a news conference. "Mr. Gilerman said the boycott had cost the Jewish state \$80 billion, 10 percent of its exports and foreign investment, a total of \$80 billion. Israeli officials have already rejected the proposal, saying the Arab boycott is 'illegal and has no connection with settlements.' Harry Wall, director of the Anti-Defamation League, urged other countries to follow the lead of the United States where legislation bars companies from honoring the boycott. 'Western Europe, Israel's largest trading partner, has shown a highly equivocal attitude towards the boycott,' Mr. Wall said. Israel has settled some 100,000 Jews in Arab lands, in contravention of the Geneva conventions.

King Hassan to visit U.S. in September

WASHINGTON (R) — King Hassan II of Morocco has accepted an invitation from President George Bush to visit Washington on Sept. 26, the U.S. administration announced Monday. "The visit reflects the friendly state of a long-standing relationship between Morocco and the United States that goes back to the earliest days of American independence," U.S. administration spokesman Martin Fitzwater said in a statement. "Talks between the two leaders are expected to centre on regional and international issues as well as on U.S.-Moroccan ties," Mr. Fitzwater said.

Kuwait plans army of conscripts

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait is considering conscription to rebuild its army, which was all but wiped out by Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion, Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah said in remarks published Tuesday. He told Al Watan newspaper in an interview that the military was 90 per cent destroyed during the invasion. "The idea of building an army based on conscription is being studied," Sheikh Ali said. He gave no further details. The Kuwaiti army, with a pre-invasion strength of 16,000 men, failed to stand up to the Iraqis, who seized the emirate in an overnight attack. The army faces a serious shortage of manpower following a decision by the government to lay off the bedouin or stateless Arabs, who formed the backbone of the armed forces.

One killed by rebel rockets in Kabul

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan Mujahadeen guerrillas fired two rockets at Kabul, killing one person and injuring five, Afghanistan's Bakhtar news agency reported Tuesday. The two ground-to-air rockets hit residential areas in the capital. Monday, causing extensive damage, the agency said.

Baker awaiting quick Israeli reply to proposal

Shamir expects talks to begin in 'a month or two'

KUALA LUMPUR (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, sounding "upbeat and optimistic," said Tuesday he was waiting for a quick reply from Israel on whether it would take part in Middle East peace talks. Mr. Baker told foreign ministers from a dozen nations that during his Middle East tour, he had "received an expression that it (Israel) would give its response shortly," officials present during Mr. Baker's remarks said. Mr. Baker added that he "did not receive a rejection from Israel," said the officials, who described his remarks as upbeat. Mr. Baker was briefing foreign ministers at talks between the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its seven major trade partners — the United States, Japan, the European Community, South Korea, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

The ASEAN members are Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei.

The officials said Mr. Baker's report was hailed by those present. They quoted Mr. Baker as saying that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir told him Israel would attend the talks provided the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was not present. Israel said Palestinians acceptable to it from the Israeli-occupied territories could attend the peace talks, Mr. Baker was quoted as saying. He added that Israel also wanted the Palestinians to agree to the existence of an Israeli state.

The officials said Mr. Baker told them that there first would be talks between Israel and the Arabs. The United States and the Soviet Union have reached agreement on co-sponsoring those talks and would attend at the foreign ministers level, they added.

These would be followed by talks between Israel and the Palestinians acceptable to Israel, but excluding the PLO, they said. Then a larger peace conference would be held among all these parties, together with observers from the European Community and the United Nations, the officials quoted Mr. Baker as saying.

There was no deadline for an Israeli response to the U.S. proposal, Mr. Baker himself told reporters. He said he would prefer to receive a reply by July 30, when a U.S.-Soviet summit begins in Moscow. "We continue to work, not just with the government of Israel, but with the government of Jordan and the Palestinians on the question of Palestinian representation," Mr. Baker said.

"And it is contemplated that we would receive a response of some kind from the Israeli government that would speak to the other elements of the process and the proposal just as we have received responses from other governments."

"Then we will continue to work on whatever other elements exist, pending the actual convening of any conference."

Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia have approved Mr. Baker's plan for a peace conference. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday he saw a "revolutionary change" in Syria's attitude. Israel could not reply until it had received clarification on subjects still unresolved, such as Palestinian representation, he said.

Mr. Shamir, in his most upbeat assessment so far of Middle East peace prospects, Tuesday likened Syria's apparent change of heart to Egypt's in 1977.

Syria's readiness to talk directly to Israel "is a phenomenon similar to what happened in Egypt with President (Anwar) Sadat when a revolution occurred in his concepts that ultimately led to negotiations with Israel and to peace," Mr. Shamir said in remarks released by his office.

Mr. Shamir also said he was hopeful that "in a month or two, we will sit together with our neighbours' representatives and we will talk."

He was speaking in his office to a delegation of prosecutors from the United States. His remarks were issued by his office, partially indirect quotations and partly in paraphrase. Until recently, Israeli leaders have expressed great scepticism about the motives of Syria. After being briefed by Mr. Baker on Syria's position Monday Mr. Shamir appeared cautiously optimistic. His comparison between Mr. Sadat and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to be a more emphatic endorsement of Mr. Baker's view, I think we are approaching the beginning of negotiations," Mr. Shamir said. He said some problems remained, specifically how Palestinians will attend negotiations, but "we hope these problems can be solved."

The Palestinian representation problem sabotaged Mr. Baker's efforts to promote peace talks last year after Mr. Shamir refused to accept Palestinians from occupied Arab Jerusalem as a negotiation partner.

Mr. Baker's comments made it clear he was not prepared to engage in more lengthy talks to clear up this question. He said several weeks ago he thought he had an agreed basis for Palestinian representation to the talks through the mechanism of a joint delegation with Jordan.

He wants to avoid delaying tactics by Mr. Shamir that could unravel the progress already achieved on the Arab side.

Mr. Baker said Israel needed to decide if it embraced the broad concept proposed by the United States. On Monday, he said the peace process was constructed on the principle

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His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday meets with PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (centre) and Palestine Ambassador to Tunisia Hakam Balawi (Petra photo).

U.S. considering easing of sanctions against Iraq

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President George Bush, pledging that the United States will not allow innocent women or children in Iraq to suffer, said Tuesday he was considering whether to ease the United Nations embargo against Baghdad. "We have not resolved yet exactly what we're going to do at the United Nations," Mr. Bush told reporters at the outset of a cabinet meeting.

But his comments seemed to indicate a softening of the hard line U.S. restriction against any letup in the economic embargo against Iraq even as it struggles to recover from its devastating losses in the Gulf war.

The New York Times reported Tuesday that the State Department had drafted a plan to remove some sanctions to allow Baghdad to sell oil to buy food and medicine. It said the proposal was still being circulated inside the government and did not yet have Mr. Bush's approval.

Mr. Bush acknowledged that he planned to discuss the situation in Iraq and the sanctions with his cabinet.

"My view is the U.N. mechanism is clear in terms of helping children and those who may be threatened with either famine or disease. The machinery is in place there," Mr. Bush said.

"It's very clear that Saddam Hussein has not complied with the U.N. resolutions, so we'll see what we can do. We're not trying to hurt any individuals there. Our argument is not with the women or children of Iraq."

He said Iraq has not made restitution to the people of Kuwait or returned the gold taken from that country after the Iraqi invasion last Aug. 2, and he said Baghdad has not made "total disclosure on possible nuclear developments."

"So there is much to be done."

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But the United States is not going to see the suffering of innocent women or children there, and there's all kinds of mechanisms to take care of it — its own resources inside the country, possible release of resources outside the country and the matter that's being discussed at the United Nations," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush said he had talked earlier Tuesday with Prince Saddam Aga Khan, the United Nations official in charge of humanitarian efforts for Iraq.

Sings of a willingness to provide relief came along with the approach of Thursday's deadline for a full inventory of Iraq's nuclear capabilities.

The United States has accused Baghdad of failing to comply with ceasefire terms requiring full disclosure and elimination of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and the ability to produce them. The deadline for compliance on that issue is July 25, although it remained to be seen whether and when the Gulf war military allies would back it up with force.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Tuesday in Turkey that Britain may support a U.N. proposal to allow Iraq to sell some oil to pay for food, but only if there are guarantees that the Iraqi army will not get the proceeds.

One U.S. official said easing of the sanctions was being considered because of the needs of the Iraqi people.

Under the various options being discussed, Baghdad would be allowed to sell some of its oil if there was certainty the money would be used for such needs as food and medicine.

The United States repeatedly said Iraq had not revealed everything about its nuclear programme.

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Soviet Union seeks full IMF membership

WASHINGTON (R) — The Soviet Union has applied to become a full member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), an organisation it once derided as a tool of the capitalist West, international monetary sources said Tuesday. The application is the latest step by Moscow to try to end more than 40 years of self-imposed economic isolation and join the international financial fold. Monetary sources said the United States is unlikely to welcome the news that the Soviet Union has applied for full membership in the IMF. Washington has argued that the membership negotiations could take two years or more and thus delay much-needed economic reforms in the Soviet Union. In contrast, the special associate status proposed by the United States could be put in place quickly — within 30 days or less — and would enable Moscow to draw on the IMF's expertise immediately in reforming its economy. U.S. officials have said Washington's allies in the Group of Seven — Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan — endorsed the U.S. proposal at last week's economic summit in London.

King and PLO team discuss coordination

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein met a Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation Tuesday for talks on the latest U.S. plan for Arab-Israeli peace talks, the Jordan News Agency, Petra reported.

The team, headed by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas, briefed the King on the outcome of his talks in Cairo with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa.

The delegation included Hakam Balawi, member of the central committee of the PLO's main stream faction, Fateh. Mr. Balawi is also Palestine's ambassador in Tunisia.

The meeting, which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan discussed the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Jordan and other countries in the region and peace efforts aimed at resolving the Palestinian problem, Petra said. The meeting was also attended by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh and Palestinian ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim.

"Maximum (Jordanian-Palestinian) coordination is needed at this very delicate stage of events," one official told Reuters.

King Hussein said after talks with Mr. Baker Sunday that he was in touch with Palestinians to discuss the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian team for any peace talks.

A similar PLO delegation is currently visiting Damascus for talks with Syrian leaders on coordination in peace efforts. That delegation is led by PLO Executive Committee member and Political Department head Farouq Kaddoumi.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa met with the delegation Monday. Their talks also believed to have covered relations between the PLO and Syria.

PLO officials have said that the PLO is willing to drop its demand for a direct role in peace talks with Israel as long as it is understood that it has a say in choosing the delegates from the occupied territories. No official statement has been issued by the PLO headquarters in Tunisia.

Lebanese army fires at Israeli warplanes

SIDON, Lebanon (Agencies) — Lebanese army gunners fired anti-aircraft rounds at low-flying Israeli warplanes which buzzed newly dismantled Palestinian refugee camps near this city Tuesday, an army communiqué reported.

It was the first time that the army headquarters has ordered action against the Israeli air force in at least 16 years.

No hits were scored. But the incident underlined Lebanon's commitment to the protection of Palestinian refugees after the camps' guerrilla defenders were stripped of their weapons under an accord reached earlier this month.

"From 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (0800-0830 GMT), the Israeli air force staged low-altitude mock raids in the Sidon area. The Lebanese army confronted the Israeli jets with anti-aircraft fire," the communiqué said.

Colonel Ali Shreim, spokesman for the South Lebanon command, read the communiqué to reporters who converged on his headquarters after the firing echoed across Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

White puffs of smoke dotted

the skies as the army troops, encircling the refugee camps of 'Ain Al Hilweh and Mieh Mieh on the southeastern flank of Sidon, operated their batteries.

Israeli warplanes regularly fly reconnaissance missions over Lebanon and attack targets at will. In recent years, not once were they opposed by the Lebanese regulars.

The army was withdrawn to its barracks when the civil war broke out in 1975. It later split along sectarian lines with some units joining militia groups fighting each other.

In 1982, when the Israelis invaded Lebanon the army had no orders to confront the air, land and sea forces attacking the country.

Under a peace accord signed in October 1989, President Elias Hrawi's government restructured the 42,000-strong army.

Army units have since been gradually disbanding local and foreign groups that fought the civil war and reasserting government sovereignty.

The army began deploying 11,000 troops in South Lebanon

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Gorbachev's programme challenges hardliners

MOSCOW (Agencies) — A radical newspaper Tuesday published what it said was Mikhail Gorbachev's new programme for the Communist Party, a document that rejects Marxist traditions, respects religious freedom and supports private property.

The draft statement appeared in Nezavisimaya Gazeta (The Independent Newspaper) two days before what is expected to be a stormy plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee.

The draft placed Mr. Gorbachev back in the camp of the radical reformers after veering last autumn towards the hardline party traditionalists.

The newspaper said the document can expect support from only about 100 staunch Gorbachev backers in the Central Committee, and raised the possibility that hardliners would try to remove Mr. Gorbachev from his position as party leader.

If the plenum does not approve the programme, the approximately 100 Gorbachev supporters "will approve it on their own, with all the resulting organisational consequences," the newspaper said — an apparent reference to a split in the party leadership.

However, Central Committee member Vladimir Svetozerov told the Associated Press Tuesday the chances of some form of the programme being approved at the plenum were "exceptionally high."

Mr. Svetozerov said the text published by the newspaper was

an unofficial version of the Communist Party programme. He said some editing of the draft is certain.

The draft, suffused with Western-style social democratic thinking, marks an outright challenge to orthodox Communists already furious over their weakening grip on power in the seventh year of perestroika. The timing of the challenge suggests Mr. Gorbachev feels confident of his strength over the right.

Moscow's hardline Communist chief Yuri Prokofiev charged recently that Mr. Gorbachev was leading the party towards a split and suggested he step down as general secretary.

"There is an orthodox, dogmatic current in the party but it's just not strong enough to radically influence events," Communist Party politburo member Alexander Dzasokhov told Reuters. "We need to be fatalistic about a split. We can act."

The strength of the "dogmatists" at Thursday's meeting of the 412-member central committee is not clear. But they seem certain to attack Mr. Gorbachev's reform plans even if they stop short of repeating April's abortive bid to remove him.

Perestroika, intended as a rebirth of communism, has brought galling defeats for the onetime omnipotent party.

It has formally lost power in major cities including Moscow and yielded control in many of the Soviet Union's 15 republics.

Iran opposes rapid deployment force in Turkey

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran Tuesday rejected the creation of an allied rapid deployment force in Turkey, saying the presence of foreign troops in the region would lead to "insecurity."

Vice President Hassan Habibi told reporters at a weekly briefing: "The presence of alien military forces around Iran's borders will lead to insecurity in the region."

Tehran Radio, monitored in Nicosia, said the aim of these forces is to realise the ambitions of the (great) powers, not to protect Iraq Kurds.

Iran "opposes the stationing of the rapid deployment force in Turkey," Mr. Habibi stressed.

Turkey shares a 350-kilometre border with Iran.

U.S.-led allied forces set up a safe haven in northern Iraq in April to enable the return of some 450,000 Iraqi Kurds who fled to the Turkish border after a failed rebellion against the government.

Another 1.2 million Kurds fled to Iran, but most have returned home as their leaders opened talks with the government to formally end the rebellion.

The coalition force in northern Iraq, which had a peak strength of 22,000, were withdrawn last week.

Some of the withdrawn troops were being organised into a 3,000-strong "quick response" force, based in the Turkish border town of Silopi.

Silopi is about 270 kilometres west of the Iranian border.

Turkish troops Monday joined allied troops assembling the strike force in southeast Turkey.

A U.S. military spokesman said some Turkish soldiers had arrived at an allied base near Silopi, where 2,284 coalition troops, about a third of them from Britain, France, Italy and the Netherlands, had gathered.

He said the U.S. general who commanded allied relief efforts for Kurdish refugees held talks Monday with Kurdish rebel leader Jalal Talabani.

Kurdish sources in northern Iraq said Mr. Talabani had flown by helicopter to the Iraqi border town of Zakho to meet Lieutenant General John Shalikashvili. No details on the talks emerged.

Mr. Talabani is one of the two main Kurdish leaders negotiating an autonomy deal with the Iraqi government in Baghdad.

Gen. Shalikashvili is due to leave Turkey soon to return to his post in Germany, the U.S. spokesman said.

The strike force is being deployed to fill a gap left by Western troops who withdrew from northern Iraq a week ago.

"In Silopi we have 2,284 allied troops right now," said Major Michael McKinney, contacted at Incirlik in southern Turkey, where aircraft for the strike force are based.

"The main job of the residual force is security in northern Iraq north of the 36th parallel," he said.

"They are conducting daily reconnaissance to deter Iraqi air and ground forces from moving into that area."

Turkey is contributing a mechanised company to the force, whose final size and composition has not been decided.

Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams said last week the total force was expected to number between 3,000 to 5,000 men, but Ankara-based diplomats said it could be as small as 2,000.

Asylum-seekers press for UNHCR action

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The plight of refugees stranded in Jordan since the eruption of the Gulf crisis in last August continues as a small number of them await for proper documents that would enable them to leave Jordan and start a new life somewhere else in the world.

Many refugees camp in front of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) offices in Amman awaiting information that would help them secure asylum in the Western world.

Around 30 Somali refugees started a sit-in last week in Amman to protest what they believed to be discriminate treatment by the commissioner of the UNHCR, Carl Fonseth. Following their week-long sit-in, around 20 Somalis met with Mr. Fonseth Monday in a three-hour meeting.

According to one of the Somalis, Mohammad Yousef, who

attended the meeting, Mr. Fonseth gave the group assurance that their cases were being followed up. "He told us that he will send a worldwide appeal to help us," Mr. Yousef told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Fonseth said that the United Nations agencies operating in Asia and Africa are mounting an effort to bring back people to their respective countries. Asked about the situation of those refugees who cannot go back to their countries for fear of political reprisals, Mr. Fonseth said that his office is only able to work and help those who can go back to their home country.

"We can only give long run assistance to those who want to go back to Somalia," Mr. Fonseth said. "The understanding between us and the (Jordanian) government is that the stay of those refugees is temporary."

"We are in continuous dialogue with our headquarters to see how the situation is in Somalia," Mr. Fonseth explained. "As

soon as I have information about the situation I will provide them with it."

The two sides have set up another appointment next Monday to discuss further information concerning their travel arrangements.

Among the refugees weary of their tiresome life in the camps that were set up to receive refugees at the onset of the Gulf crisis are three Iranian youths stranded in the Kingdom with no documents or passports.

One of the youths who preferred to withhold his identity for political reasons, gave his assumed name as Ameer Hamadani. He explained that he was along with two other youths, Hammed Parvis, and Kareem Mahmoud (also not their real names), were political refugees in Iraq following their escape from the Khomeini regime in Iran.

After being for 12 years in Iraq, Hamadani, 28, was able to get a permit to immigrate to Canada through the UNHCR office in Baghdad. "But when the

war broke out the commissioner of the UNHCR office in Baghdad, Estafan Bodemar, abandoned us," Mr. Hamadani asserted. "We then escaped the bombing and came into Jordan leaving behind us our documents and legal papers."

"The difference between us and the other refugees is that we cannot go back to Iran because we will be executed," Hamadani said. "We are not going to give up until we meet with him."

"When it comes to (dealing with) the Canadian embassy it is a very lengthy procedure," Mr. Fonseth said. "We have not yet received the green light from Canada."

"We are in constant touch with the Canadians and they promised us that as soon as they get the green light they will send them to Canada," Mr. Fonseth added.

Hamadani, whose family is still living in Iran, says that he broke all relations with political parties and is hoping to start a fresh life somewhere in the world. "We want to use our skills. We want to start a new life and leave the past behind."

"I blame the UNHCR. We are living in a very hard situation in

the Andalus camp," Hamadani said. "But they did not solve our problems, they even told us they could send us out."

Standing in front of the UNHCR building in Amman, Hamadani said that he will not leave until he meets Mr. Fonseth. "Everytime I come they tell me to come back tomorrow," Hamadani said. "We are not going to give up until we meet with him."

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Iraqis await new deadline with memories of war

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqis are nervously awaiting Thursday's deadline for their government to fully disclose its nuclear secrets under threat of a new allied military attack.

Thousands have fled to Jordan, capital residents are stockpiling food and fuel, and there are signs the army is taking seriously the chance of more air strikes.

Sandbagged anti-aircraft machine-gun nests have appeared atop the gatehouse of the main security police headquarters in Baghdad and at other government buildings in recent days.

However, there has been no public declaration of a military alert.

"If there was one, they wouldn't tell us," an Information Ministry spokesman said Monday.

The news media have been quiet on the subject of the U.N. deadline, which said Iraq would face "serious consequences" if it did not fully disclose all its nuclear

lear material, equipment and facilities by July 25.

Under the ceasefire agreement ending the Gulf war, Iraq had agreed to cooperate with U.N. inspection and destruction of its capabilities to build or use weapons of mass destruction.

After soldiers fired guns to keep U.N. inspectors from photographing a convoy of equipment being moved to a hiding place, the U.S., British and French governments indicated that air strikes might be warranted to destroy Iraq's remaining nuclear facilities and military installations where materials could be hidden.

"The very real threat of attack persuaded the Iraqis to hand over a new list of nuclear facilities to the U.N. inspection team on July 14 and to declare to the head of the team on July 18 that they had given a full declaration of all their facilities," Charles Snow, an analyst, said Monday in the Middle East Economic Survey, published in Cyprus.

At the United Nations and in Washington, D.C., there is still suspicion that Iraq may have significant quantities of high-enriched, weapons grade uranium.

The U.N. Special Commission said on July 18, "there is much work to be done before any conclusions can be reached about whether or not more equipment or material remain. ... it would be inappropriate for the commission to take the government of Iraq's statements at face value."

On the same day, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Thomas Pickens accused Iraq of continuing a "pattern of reckless defiance of the expressed will of the international community."

Many Iraqis, including public officials, did not believe there would be a war in January, when the allies gave Iraq until the middle of the month to withdraw from Kuwait. They were surprised there was no last-minute

settlement to prevent six weeks of devastating bombing.

The U.N. team which left Friday saying it believed Iraq had revealed all it could about its nuclear programme may influence whether U.S. President George Bush and his key allies decide new fighting is necessary.

"With the Americans not only prepared to take military action, but giving every appearance of being eager to do so, it would be surprising if there was not a certain amount of nervousness in Baghdad as the July 25 deadline approaches," said Mr. Snow.

In Baghdad, people have been hoarding food, bottled gas for cooking and gasoline, just as they did in early January. Pickup trucks carrying empty tanks in the back line up at gasoline stations.

Thousands of Iraqis have gone to Jordan in the past couple of weeks, joining a steady stream that began when the wartime travel restrictions were eased on May 15.

'Reagan administration ignored Syrian offer on hostages'

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A confidential Defence Department memo says Syrian officials secretly offered to help get U.S. hostages out of Lebanon in the 1980s in exchange for better relations with the United States, a newspaper reports.

But, according to the San Francisco Examiner, the Reagan administration did not pursue the offers.

The newspaper said it obtained the memo and published a story about it Sunday.

Former U.S. security officials insist the Syrian offers were not genuine, but those who pursued the offers say the U.S. government did not investigate them enough to judge.

According to the memo dated March 17, 1987, Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North was among those told of the Syrian offer. At the time, Col. North was coordinating the Iran-contra deals that sent profits from secret arms sales to Iran to contra rebels in Nicaragua despite a congressional ban on such aid.

Congressional sources told the paper that members of the Senate Intelligence Committee are reviewing the matter to determine whether a promising offer was ignored.

According to the memo, a Defence Department meeting took place March 16, 1987, among Lawrence Ropka, two of his assistants and U.S. businessman Robert Ladd and his attorney, Irving Jaffe. Mr. Ropka was principal deputy of Richard Armitage, then assistant secretary of defence for international security affairs and now a State Department special negotiator.

U.N. refugee head 'shocked' at Ethiopian deaths

KEBRIBEYAH, Ethiopia (R) — U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata has appealed for international aid to prevent thousands of Ethiopian refugees from starving to death in camps in the barren Ogaden region.

Aid workers say around 50 people are dying each day at Kebribeyah alone, shelter to 30,000 Ethiopians who have returned to their homeland from neighbouring Somalia since January.

They fled 13 years ago from war between the neighbouring states for this desert region in the southeast of Ethiopia, but civil war in Somalia forced them to return.

"The camp for the returnees at Kebribeyah is much worse than I expected and people are dying due to lack of food," Ms. Ogata told journalists after visiting the camp Monday.

"I found the returnee situation very dismal and distressing and I

will do the best I can to push the donor community to respond more favourably and compassionately," she said.

Ms. Ogata, a Japanese, appeared overwhelmed as thousands of emaciated men and women lined her way in the dusty makeshift camp, waving and calling her name in unison as a greeting.

Most were accompanied by famished children, and some — appearing on the verge of death — could barely move.

Sherif Ali Mohammed, 55 and a father of seven, said his family only received enough grain supplies for around 10 days a month. He had watched his wife and three other children starve to death.

"There was nothing I could do," Mr. Sherif said. "For 20 days of every month we have to scavenge the bush for wild fruits or simply lie down and await death."

Rita Bathia, a UNHCR nutri-

tionalist, said health care for young children was out of control, with nearly half of those under five expected to die of hunger. Many are already dead.

Cecil Kpenou, UNHCR representative in Ethiopia said the UNHCR and U.N. World Food Programme had appealed for \$15 million to help the refugees.

"But so far none has been received and their situation is deteriorating daily," he said.

Head of state named

Ethiopia's national assembly has unanimously elected the country's interim president, former guerrilla chief Meles Zenawi, as head of state and government, state media reported.

The Ethiopian News Agency said Tuesday Mr. Meles was elected unopposed by the 81-member assembly as president of the country's transitional government. It added that two other candidates had withdrawn ahead

of the election Monday.

A report on state television late Monday said Mr. Meles, who led the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) to victory against former President Mengistu Haile Mariam in May, was also elected head of state.

Mr. Meles in an acceptance speech pledged to fulfil a national charter, adopted in early July at a conference of 24 political and ethnic groups, which would be a democratic blueprint for the country after 14 years of Marxist rule.

"In the name of all those who sacrificed their lives for the cause of peace and democracy, I pledge myself to execute the heavy responsibility bestowed upon me in all fairness and honesty," Mr. Meles was quoted as saying.

The charter guarantees basic human rights, freedom of association and expression and a large measure of autonomy for different ethnic groups.

Polish 'air bridge' has shuttled 50,000 Soviet Jews to Israel

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — More than 50,000 Soviet Jews have used Poland as a gateway to Israel over the last year in an emigration operation largely kept hidden for security reasons, according to an Israeli managing the transit.

The operation was hushed up for more than a year, with Polish and Israeli officials unwilling to discuss details.

Each day up to 800 emigres, their possessions in bundles, arrive on trains and buses from the Soviet Union. They are met by the Jewish emigration agency, processed by passport agents

brought to a secret hotel and put aboard planes for Israel, usually all within 24 hours.

"We make sure they see a nice Israeli smile and hear a 'shalom' and feel safe on their first day of freedom," said Moshe Peled, an Israeli who returned to his native Poland in June 1990 to organise the "air bridge."

However, its general outline recently has become public. President Leszek Waleasa discussed the emigration during his May visit to Israel, and Poland's largest newspaper, Gazeta Wyborcza, this month carried a lengthy story on the emigration.

Poland became one of the main links in the emigration of Soviet Jews after its first post-communist government restored full diplomatic ties with Israel in late February 1990.

Emigrants are also moved through Bucharest, Budapest and Helsinki in shuttles made necessary because Israel and the Soviet Union do not have diplomatic relations.

"It is OK with the (Polish) authorities as long as we don't disturb them," Mr. Peled said in an interview at the cramped, two-room bureau that serves as the

operation's Warsaw nerve centre.

The Jewish Agency for Immigration and Absorption avoids "hostility" from Poles by hiring Polish customs and passport agents to come to the emigrants' hotel, bypassing the airport entirely, Mr. Peled said.

Israeli and Polish agents provide security, and the hotels are changed regularly.

With its 1,100-kilometre Soviet border, Poland is a relatively easy and cheap destination for Soviet Jews granted exit visas.

About 260,000 of the two to

three million Jews living in the Soviet Union have left since 1989 — 118,000 this year alone.

The number of refugees soared to a high of 800 a day during June, apparently because many feared Soviet passport rule changes would limit exit visas or extend the wait.

As of July 1, emigrating Jews are allowed to keep Soviet citizenship and return if they want. Mr. Peled said from 50 to 125 are arriving daily in Warsaw now and he expects the number to level off at about 5,000 monthly.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq to attend Islamic conference

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein Khudayer will travel to Istanbul for next month's Islamic foreign ministers conference, the weekly magazine Alef Bas reported Tuesday. It said the visit to Turkey for the six-day conference, which opens Aug. 3, would be his first trip abroad since he took the post in March. Topics on the conference agenda include the Middle East problem and strengthening relations among the 45 members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Secretary-General Hamid Al Ghabid arrived in Syria from Jordan Monday on the second leg of a tour of member states in preparation for the meeting and an Islamic summit due in December in Dakar. An OIC statement said Mr. Ghabid was aiming at "mending fences, restoring confidence, onifying ranks and clearing the atmosphere among member states." In May, Iraq's minister of state for foreign affairs, Mohammad Sa'ed Al Sahaf, attended an Arab League meeting in Cairo.

Turkish court bans new Communist party

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — The Turkish constitutional court has banned the United Communist Party of Turkey which was founded 13 months ago in a merger of Marxist groups. The court said it was illegal for a party to carry the name "Communist" and that its aim was to disrupt national unity. The chief public prosecutor had asked the court to declare the party illegal immediately after it was founded in June 1990. The prosecutor argued that the party advocated class struggle and flaunted its ties to the outlawed Turkish Communist Party, which was banned in 1920 after it was founded in 1920 by Turkish intellectuals in post-revolutionary Russia. The United Communist Party (TBKP) was formed through a merger of the Turkish Communist Party and the Turkish Labour Party, another Marxist group. The leaders of the two parties, Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin, returned from exile in West Germany in November 1987, only to be jailed for 30 months. Their jailing and charges that they had been tortured brought criticism from Western governments and human rights organisations. Emboldened by their release following international pressure, Mr. Kutlu and Mr. Sargin decided to merge their parties.

Khartoum university closed after student killed

KHARTOUM (R) — Khartoum University has closed after a student was killed in clashes with riot police. The vice chancellor, Professor Mudathir Al Tingari, ordered the closure Sunday after days of student demonstrations over plans to turn a student hostel for men over to women students. The university has expelled 12 students and suspended 10 for stirring up the trouble and trying to turn the accommodation dispute into a political issue. Mr. Tingari told the Tuesday edition of the government-owned newspaper Al Ingaz Al Watani. The student, biology freshman Tariq Ibrahim from the White Nile town of Kosti, was killed in clashes at the main university campus and a women student was taken to hospital with injuries and later discharged, he said. The male students at the medical faculty rejected the new accommodation arrangements on the grounds that to their new quarters they would have to sleep eight to a room instead of four, university officials said. The dispute began at the faculty eight days ago and clashes later spread to the main campus five kilometres away. Prof. Tingari said he had closed the university temporarily to prevent instability. He did not say when it would reopen. The security forces have released all the students detained during the disturbances, newspapers said.

Tremors jolt towns in western Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Several earthquakes jolted three Kurdish towns near Iran's border with Iraq but caused no damage or casualties, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Tuesday. Panicking residents rushed to the streets when three tremors jolted Baneh, 500 kilometres west of Tehran, within nine minutes from 11 p.m. (1830 GMT) Monday, it said. There was no report on the intensity of the quakes. Another quake measuring 4.6 on the Richter scale struck Piranshahr, 80 kilometres north of Baneh Monday morning. Mahabad, east of Piranshahr, was shaken Sunday night. Thousands of people in Tehran, frightened by a Chinese astrologer's prediction that a strong earthquake would hit the capital, went outdoors Sunday. The forecast proved wrong.

Businessmen return to Kuwait after straying

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Two businessmen, one an American and the other a Briton, have been returned to Kuwait after straying over the border into Iraq, diplomats and security officials said Tuesday. The two were reported missing last Thursday. Picked up by Iraqi security forces, they reportedly were questioned in the border town of Safwan and then turned over to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross Monday, said one official who insisted on anonymity. Barry Lowen, spokesman for the British embassy here, said: "The missing British citizen has returned." He declined to give the man's name and said he was planning to leave Kuwait soon. Mr. Lowen said the Briton and the American "were in some way connected with the oil-field fires."

Gorbachev joins calls for Cyprus conference

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev added his voice Monday to calls for an early international conference to resolve the Cyprus dispute. But he steered clear of favouring either the Greek or Turkish positions on the proposed settlement talks. "This transitional period in European history ... demands that old knots should be untied quickly. I have the Cyprus problem in mind too," TASS news agency quoted him as saying at his. "We are for an early international conference on Cyprus, for Greek and Turkish, further Cypriot statehood and promote peaceful coexistence." Turkey, which has 30,000 troops in the northern part of the divided island, wants a four-way conference of Greece, Turkey, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Greece rejects this, saying it would implicitly give the administration of northern Cyprus equal status with the internationally-recognised Cypriot government.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Art programme
18:30 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Don't wait up
21:10 Silk Route of the Sea
22:00 News in English
22:30 La Milliardaire

PRAYER TIMES

04:47 Fajr
15:38 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:42 Dhuhr
16:23 'Asr
19:46 Maghreb
20:17 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzianists Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772611

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 653265

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

A drop in temperatures will take place and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh causing dust at times. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to fresh and seas wavy.

Amman Min./max. temp. 17 / 28
Aqaba 25 / 37
Dahab 19 / 35
Jordan Valley 23 / 35

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 39, Humidity reading: Amman 58 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Isam Al Abdi 679666
Dr. Hanna Mansour 748264
Dr. Tayseer Saadi 777636
Dr. Adel Ammani 812148
Firas Pharmacy 661912
Fardous pharmacy 778336
Al Azema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salsan pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ziad Al Bakri (—)
Al Sharan pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Khamsi Al Ja'abari (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 731228
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630331
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 6672279
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 623101
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 731111
Radio Jordan 741111
Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615

Electric Power Company

Masri, unions discuss employment

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Taher Masri met Tuesday with a delegation representing the Jordanian labour unions. The meeting, which was held in the presence of the Minister of Labour and the Prime Ministry Affairs, Abdul Karim Dughni, discussed the issue of the unions' work in Jordan in light of the government's policy statement presented to the Lower House of Parliament recently, particularly the new labour law that conforms with the democratisation process in Jordan.

Mr. Masri was briefed by members of the delegation on problems facing labourers and solutions to these problems.

The prime minister stressed what was mentioned on the policy statement regarding labour unions and said he considered this meeting as a starting point for serious work.

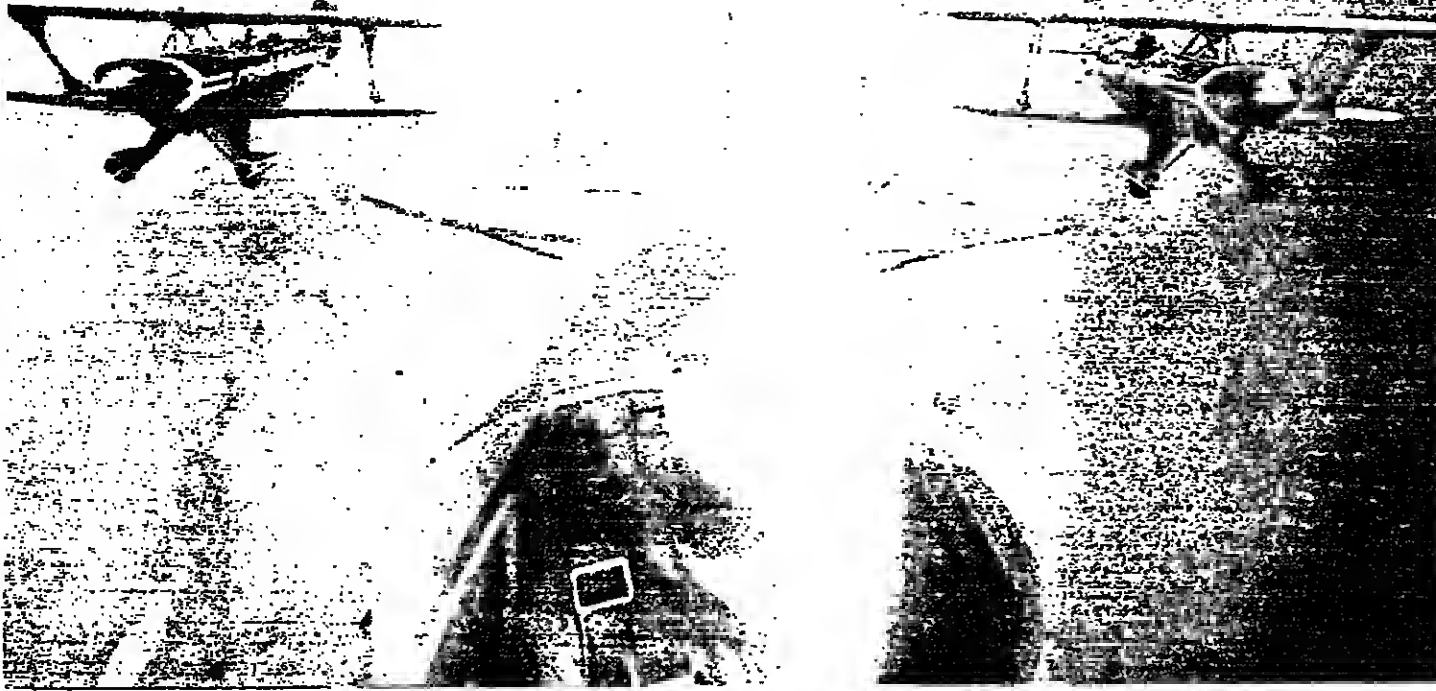
He emphasised the important role the labour unions could play in replacing foreign labourers in Jordan with Jordanian citizens "through breaking up the psychological barrier which stands between them and filling some jobs occupied by foreigners."

Mr. Masri reviewed with the delegation the current situation in the Middle East and the latest developments on the Palestinian issue and the U.S. efforts to solve it.

He affirmed Jordan's principled stand on the Middle East problem, which is based on solving it on the basis of international legitimacy and the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

On Monday, Mr. Masri met with the presidents of the Jordanian Professional Associations and discussed with them the role of their associations in serving Jordanian society.

Mr. Masri also reviewed the government's policy statement presented to the Lower House of Parliament recently and the implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives.



ROYAL SHOW: The Royal Falcons will perform in honour of King Hussein

Gliding club to mark anniversary of King's accession to the throne

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Jordanian Gliding Club (RJGC) will this year mark the anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne with a special festival by plane gliders, the first of its kind in the Kingdom, according to an announcement here Tuesday by the club's Director Ziyad Rahaleh.

Lt. Col. Rahaleh told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the festival which will be held in the first half of the coming month, will include air and ground shows displaying various types of military and civilian planes.

Taking part in the festival are the Royal Jordanian Air Force;

Royal Jordanian, the national air carrier; The Arab Wings; the Royal Jordanian Air Academy; the Royal Falcons Club and the Public Security Department; which will display some of its police helicopters.

According to Lt. Col. Rahaleh, Air Force planes and helicopters together with those belonging to the Royal Falcons clubs and the RJGC will present aerial shows and free falls by parachutes over Amman. He said that the public will be invited to fly in some of these aircraft for a nominal fee.

The festival will be organised for three days at Amman Civil Airport.

According to Lt. Col.

Rahaleh, the RJGC was established in 1986 upon King Hussein's directives and is affiliated to the Royal Air Academy. The present membership, according to Lt. Col. Rahaleh, is 150.

The aim of the club, he said, is to spread knowledge about aviation among the various groups of Jordanian citizens and to encourage them to learn to fly planes through the club.

Those undergoing training normally pay nominal fees for their courses and their number is on the increase, he added.

One of the club's instructors, Riyadh Al Tal, said that 200 Jordanians have already been trained in plane gliding. The total number of people flying in the club's craft to have a view of Amman has now reached 5,000.

The club is willing to expand its operations and offer as many opportunities as possible for all people, Mr. Tal said.

He said that the instructors at the club are all Jordanian pilots with high qualifications who took part in gliding competitions held in Britain and Germany.

The RJGC, according to Mr. Tal, is the second club of its kind in the entire Middle East. Its operations and activities, he said, have received encouragement and support from His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein, who chairs the Club's Board of Directors.

PNC speaker announces he will not seek reelection

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The speaker of the Palestine National Council (PNC), Sheikh Abdul Hamid Al Sayeh, announced Tuesday that he does not wish to run for the post again in the coming PNC elections, expected to be held in September.

Sheikh Sayeh told Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times that whether serving in a prominent post or in his capacity as an ordinary citizen he would be serving the Palestinian cause. New Palestinian blood will enter the PNC in the coming elections and the new elements will represent all Palestinian groups and sectors, Sheikh Sayeh said.

He stressed that some of the Palestinian factions and popular groups and unions have already started naming their candidates

for the coming PNC membership elections.

But, he said, the new PNC would not include more than 452 members who represent the Palestinian people in and outside the occupied Arab territories.

A special committee preparing for the PNC's coming meeting is due to meet in Tunis in the coming week to pave the way for elections, which are going to be held in the Tunisian capital. The committee, he said, groups representatives of various Palestinian political factions.

Sheikh Sayeh, who resides in Amman, said that the general conditions prevailing in the Palestinian lands and the pressures being exercised on the Palestinian people require the speeding up of the election process. He said that the coming PNC will have to deal with the question of crystallising the



Abdul Hamid Al Sayeh
Palestinian people's national orientation since it serves as the Palestinian Parliament in exile.

Quality of salt produced in Jordan being questioned as foreign firm considers entering local market

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A great deal of controversy surrounds the question of whether table salt produced in Jordan meets the highest possible standards and if alternative methods of refining salt will improve its quality.

Informed sources at Al Azrak refinery said that many complaints about the salt produced there have been addressed to them. Many complaints claim that the salt is reddish in tincture and not the high quality white colour it should be. But the manager of the Al Azrak refinery, Farhat Al Akraa, said that the salt that is of poor quality did not come from Al Azrak.

"There is an amount of salt marketed under the Azrak refinery's name that comes from the Dead Sea area and is marketed illegally. The people doing that are not selling salt that is of good quality. What is happening is that we are getting the blame for the poor quality," Mr. Al Akraa said, adding that these "illegal" producers have been traced and legal action will be taken against them.

Mr. Al Akraa said that Al Azrak refinery was always ready to make their salt better. "We intended to improve our salt long before we received complaints about poorly processed salt marketed in our name (which

we wrongfully got the blame for). But there were many obstacles that prevented this," Mr. Al Akraa said, citing January of 1990 as the date previously chosen for the tender.

"The person who decided to put down a tender in January of 1990 died before the tender was placed and the idea died with him," Mr. Al Akraa said. "Then when the Gulf crisis began the time for a bid did not seem appropriate," he said.

"Now the time seemed suitable," he said, adding that salt taken from ground deposits from Al Azrak was found to be even better than Dead Sea salt. And since salt was plentiful in Al Azrak, it was decided that there was no need for a salt refinery near the Dead Sea area. It was also decided that improving the salt refining process in Al Azrak would produce the best possible table salt.

Al Azrak salt refinery in east Amman is the only such refinery in Jordan and it produces 120 tonnes of refined salt daily. According to Mr. Al Akraa, the average consumption of Jordan is 24 tonnes each day.

Only 12 tonnes of Jordan's salt needs are provided by Al Azrak refinery. The rest is provided by the Arab Potash Company (APC). This salt is also of very high quality and it is a by-product to potash.

The APC markets some of the

salt it produces through Al Azrak refinery as part of a written agreement between the two parties specifying that APC could sell the table salt it produces at competitive market prices to local areas.

Informed sources who preferred anonymity said that this agreement has worked well so far as the APC does not pose a threat as a competitor to the Azrak refinery. But this may change.

According to informed sources at the APC, the issue is being reevaluated because of possible new competition.

"There is a Swiss company undergoing a feasibility study on salt production in Jordan. This company, Krebb, is studying the possibility of making high quality industrial salt as well as a possible project to make the quality table salt," a source said. "If the table salt project is adopted, the Azrak salt refinery may have a competitor. The negative attitude in this case is being raised by the workers at the Azrak refinery to whom this refinery is the sole source of income."

"So far, no definite plans have been made but we are already receiving (complaints) about the idea. Whether the table salt project will be taken on remains to be seen," the source said.

"Krebb's study will be completed in four months. That is when we will know," the source added.

Symposium blames Arab regimes siding with West as main culprits of Gulf war

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in a two-day symposium on the Gulf crisis' causes and results Tuesday discussed a working paper dealing with the consequences of the crisis on the Palestine problem.

The Gulf war had its shocking and detrimental effect on the spirit of the Arab and Islamic nations, which felt totally humiliated and in total despair, said the paper presented by Dr. Mohammad Oweidah from the University of Jordan.

The Gulf war presented the true nature of the struggle between the Western colonial ideology and culture versus that of the Arab and Islamic nation. It also displayed the Western powers' determination to obliterate Arab military strength and dissipate the nation's wealth to keep the Arabs and the Muslims in total disarray so that the United States can be the sole superpower, according to the paper.

The paper also pointed out that the consequences of the war would encourage the Israelis to become more arrogant, taking a more adamant position with regard to peace, particularly in the wake of the end of the Palestinian military presence in Lebanon and Palestinian political strength in the Gulf region.

The paper said the Israelis, who continue to occupy Arab lands with encouragement from the Western nations, are bound to take fresh measures to stifle the Palestinian uprising and accelerate the process of settling Jews in occupied Palestine.

But apart from this, the Gulf war had its positive effect in that the war exposed to the Arab and Muslim masses those regimes, political parties and groups that used to raise empty slogans, providing them traitors to the Arab causes, Mr. Oweidah noted in his paper.

Furthermore, the Gulf war resulted in a stronger Israeli stand and a weaker Western position with regard to Israeli intransigence and showed beyond a doubt the double standard the Western nations adopt with regard to various world issues.

The delegates, gathered at the Philadelphia Hotel in Amman, reviewed another paper by Dr. Ahmad Ziani from Egypt, who discussed the imbalances created in the Middle East as a result of the Gulf war.

Imbalance has emerged at the individual and regional levels with regard to security, said the paper.

One of the casualties of the Gulf war was the Arab League's Joint Defence Pact, which was originally set up in order to maintain stability in the region. The paper said that the war also resulted in the emergence of only one superpower which can pressure the Arab countries to recognise Israel and end their economic boycott of the Jewish state, thus paving the ground for a new colonial era in the region.

A third paper, which tackled the effect of the Gulf crisis on the Arab order, said that the crisis has caused deep rifts within the Arab World and that could not have happened had not some Arab regimes been in collusion with the Zionists and the colonial powers. The paper, by Dr. Abdullah Al Nughush from the University of Jordan, said that the coming years would reveal those regimes which colluded with the Western colonialist powers instead of siding with their Arab brothers.

The paper expressed the view that the Arab countries had been independent in name only, but that genuine independence should start with the Arabs aiming towards unifying so that they can affect world affairs.

The paper blamed Arab and Islamic regimes for failing to work to safeguard the interests of their own people and for preferring to become an easy tool in the hands of the aggressors.

A paper submitted to the conference by Jordanian Economist Fahd Al Fanek said that the Kingdom was in need to \$10.5 billion to absorb the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates returning to Jordan from the Gulf region in the wake of the war.

Dr. Fanek said that Jordan will be in need of \$7.5 billion in order to provide education and health services, water, electric power, transport and communications. The estimate takes into account that the economic cost for the absorption of each individual is JD 10,000.

The paper also dealt with the effects of the Gulf war on the Arab World in general and the Jordanian national economy in particular. He said that the Kingdom was in need of \$3 billion to find employment for the expatriates.

U.N. advisor commends Jordan on environmental protection efforts

AMMAN (J.T.) — Unlike most of the Third World countries, Jordan is concerned about protecting the environment and it is to be praised for establishing a special government department to take charge of this matter, according to an advisor to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) now touring Arab countries.

The advisor, Sirrel Khitem Khalifa — who has been touring part of Jordan and meeting with officials to discuss questions related to the protection of the environment, said that many of the Third World's countries are plagued by a heavy population density and lack sufficient means to carry out proper national environmental policies.

Mr. Khalifa told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that his

current visit to Jordan and the other Arab states was aimed at examining national efforts to promote environmental education in schools and to offer UNEP assistance in protecting the environment.

Jordan has already taken steps towards protecting its environment and Jordanians are showing noticeable concern over pollution, said Mr. Khalifa.

Mr. Khalifa, who earlier met with Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Salim Al Zoubi and Minister of Education Eid Dahiyat, has been visiting a number of regions where environmental protection projects are being implemented.

He discussed with Mr. Zoubi Jordan's national environment strategy, which will be completed next month.

Mr. Khalifa said that many Third World countries lack awareness about the need to protect the environment and do not provide facilities to U.N. and international organisations which seek to fight pollution. Mr. Khalifa urged Third World nations to cooperate with these organisations to find solutions to environmental issues that plague the world at large.

Referring to the situation in the Gulf and the effects of the war on the environment, Mr. Khalifa said to date there are no surveys and studies proving that the Gulf war had a negative impact on the region's environment as a whole.

Mr. Khalifa is currently on a tour that would take him to Syria, Yemen and Bahrain on similar missions.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Egypt

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to congratulate him on the 39th anniversary of the June 23 Revolution. King Hussein wished Mr. Mubarak continued good health and happiness and the Egyptian people further progress and prosperity.

King meets Armed Forces officials

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Tuesday visited the General Command of the Armed Forces where he was received by Chief of Staff Fathi Abu Taleb, his assistants, the commander of the Royal Air Force and the inspector general. King Hussein held a meeting with Gen. Abu Taleb and discussed with him issues of concern to the Armed Forces.

King awards medal to ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday conferred Al Istiklal Medal of the First Order on the outgoing Bahraini ambassador to Jordan, Ibrahim Ali Ibrahim, in recognition of his efforts in improving Jordanian-Bahraini relations. Mr. Ibrahim was presented with the medal by Foreign Minister Abdullah Ensour at a special ceremony held in his honour at Hotel Jordan Intercontinental.

Deputy requests review of fees

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Deputy Saad Haddadin of the Madaba constituency has asked the House to review the departure fees paid at Jordanian airports by travellers abroad and to make the fees proportional to the prices of the tickets and the destinations. In a memorandum sent to the House Speaker, Deputy Haddadin also called for

raising the standards of teachers in private sector schools as their counterparts in the government schools and to give them the right to have the Royal "makrumah" (university scholarships) to the teachers' sons and daughters.

Lower House to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament will hold a meeting Wednesday under the chairmanship of House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyah and in the presence of Prime Minister Taher Masri and the cabinet members. The house is scheduled to discuss the legal committee's resolutions on an amendment to the Martyrs Fund Law for the year 1990 and the Penal Codes Law for 1990. The committee met Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Hussein Mjalli and approved the National Economy Protection Law after adding to it an article pertaining to ending the regulations of martial law, which was later rejected by the committee.

Chamber to open new office

AMMAN (J.T.) — The board of directors of the Amman Chamber of Industry decided to open an office at Amman Industrial Estate in Sahab, south of Amman. The decision aims at facilitating official procedures at the industrial estate and in areas surrounding it. The number of establishments at the industrial estate is estimated at more than 200.

U.N. employees to visit Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian expatriate, Mohammad Amin Abdul Rubb, arrived in Amman from Geneva Tuesday on a working visit to the Kingdom. During his stay in Amman, Dr. Abdul Rubb will prepare a programme for a tourist visit to Jordan by a delegation comprising employees of the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva. The delegation will visit several tourist and archaeological sites in Jordan.

COMPUTER GRAPHICS DEMONSTRATION

The French Embassy in Amman & Muhanna Engineering House (MEHCO) Have the pleasure to announce the demonstration for Computer graphics provided by Getris Images, a leading French Company in this field. The demonstration will be held at:

Amra Hotel

Nabatean Suite between 9 a.m. - 1p.m.

SATURDAY 27TH JULY 1991

Such systems are of great interest for planning architecture, advertising, graphic designers and broadcasting corporations.

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Contacts: Mr. Gerard Blonde! Tel. 642878

MEHCO, Tel. 651366, 635355 - FAX: 651355

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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Jordan Times advertising department.

Meeting the needs of Iraq

U.S. President George Bush's statement that Washington is considering easing the international sanctions against Iraq is welcome news coupled with reports that there is consensus among the members of the United Nations Security Council that the Iraqi people stand in urgent need of food and medicine.

It may be a useless exercise to remind the Bush Administration and its anti-Iraq allies in Europe and elsewhere that easing of the sanctions to allow Iraq to raise enough funds to pay for its food and medicine needs should have come much earlier. But judging from the shape of things in the Security Council and indications that a firm decision in favour of Iraq could be as far away as three weeks from now, it is imperative to send the world powers the message that no more feet-dragging could be allowed in ensuring that the Iraqi people meet their urgent needs.

Even today, it could be too late for hundreds of thousands of women and children in Iraq to save themselves from the damages caused by months of malnutrition and shortage of medicine. The situation has already left deep scars in the Iraqi society, and it will take years before any semblance of normality is restored.

It may not mean much to Washington or its allies, but for us in the Arab World it is clear that the innovative spirit and the instinct for survival among the Iraqi people have held the society together for so long under the hard-biting effects of the sanctions coupled with the devastation that the war has left behind.

We hope that there is enough sincerity and goodwill among the world powers grouped in the Security Council to understand the pressing need to adopt immediate action to ensure that the deterioration of the situation in Iraq is brought to a halt. It is not enough to express words of understanding; what the Iraqi people need is action — urgent action.



ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i daily Tuesday reaffirmed Jordan's stand vis-a-vis the economic boycott imposed on Israel and said that Israel's occupation is illegal and that Arabs have the right to take whatever measures necessary to force the aggressors to evacuate occupied lands. The paper said that it is an Arab duty to hold on to the boycott regulations as long as the occupation exists and as long as the Israelis continue to build settlements on Arab-owned land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Judging from the speed in building the Jewish settlements, one can only conclude that the Zionists have no intention of giving up occupied Arab land and are not concerned with the implementation of the international legitimacy and the U.N. Security Council resolutions, the paper noted. Therefore, the paper said, it is only natural for the Arabs to hold on to the regulations of the economic boycott of Israel and it is only just to demand that the Israelis halt the construction of settlements and the evacuation of all occupied Arab territories. These are the minimum demands acceptable to the Arabs who want to see Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 implemented in full, otherwise there can be no chance for a just peace in the region, the paper continued. Stopping the building of settlements, withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied Arab territories and respect for the international legitimacy are all rightful demands by the Arabs who have accepted the idea of swapping land for peace, the paper said. The paper said that it is only within this concept that justice can be achieved and peace can be secured.

Despite the atmosphere of optimism created by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker following his talks with the Israeli leaders, it is clear that his mission in Israel was stemmed and he did not secure the Israeli government's acceptance of the U.S. administration's initiative, Al Dastour daily said Tuesday. The paper said that Israel seems to be holding on to its pre-conditions before any peace conference can be convened and it is clear that the United States is allowing the Israelis to have all the time they need before taking a final decision. But, the paper pointed out, that the U.S. administration is allowing that to happen while realising that the Shamir government is only stalling and is not willing to enter the peace negotiations to reach a settlement. The United States, which was pressuring the Arabs to give their replies to its peace initiative, is dealing differently with the Israelis who refuse the American plan and continue to reject the bid for peace, the paper added. In view of the situation, we find ourselves face to face with continued Israeli intransigence and continued occupation and continued building of settlements on Arab land, with the United States condoning such policies and encouraging the Israelis to hold on to the occupied Arab territories, the paper noted. It said that the United States is not benefiting from this golden opportunity to overcome the last stumbling block and achieve peace and security in the region.

Economic Forum

Unemployment again and again

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

NOT only inflation is here to stay, but so is unemployment. This is unfortunately a fact of economic life, that has to be reckoned with if any realistic solutions are to be worked out in order to alleviate these economic woes and make life more tolerable with them.

Annual price increases of less than five per cent are difficult to be attained on a sustainable basis. That is what we mean by saying that inflation is here to stay. Even if that very ambitious goal is attained, we still will have to live with the costs of living, that have become pretty high both on their own and compared with income levels.

Linguistically speaking, full employment is a term which can be entirely deceiving. Finding a job for every job-seeker is virtually not possible, so that the state of full employment refers to a situation where unemployment rate is not more than three per cent, and even not more than five per cent according to certain modern schools of thought. This is what is called the natural rate of unemployment, meaning that at any level of economic activity, there are bound to be persons who do not find jobs for a variety of reasons.

In its ministerial statement, the government made a promise to tackle the problem of unemployment in words which can be easily

misunderstood by the man in the street as to mean that this problem will not be with us in the short or medium terms. The deputies also raised this issue in a context which suggested that they believed the government could really resolve it if only it was serious about that. Both notions are not realistic and misleading. The unemployment problem will not be resolved before our economic policy and development strategy undergo profound change.

The textbook conventional wisdom has it that unemployment is solved through labour-intensive projects. This is right, provided it is correctly interpreted as to duly allow for the particular circumstances of the concerned country. Now, what does this mean to Jordan?

With a very shallow industrial base and potential, obtaining mainly from a narrow domestic market and poor energy sources, any employment "revolution" must start from the agricultural sector. Services constitute another point of departure.

The agricultural diagnosis is very simple. There are plenty of jobs in agriculture which are engaged by imported labour. These jobs suffice to absorb all unemployed Jordanians who shy away from them because our agricultural sector is not modern enough. The working conditions are commonly so harsh and tough to the

extent that Jordanians flock from them away to the "mercy" of unemployment. The modernisation of Jordanian agriculture is what we need. This does not include only technicalities (production methods, varieties, agricultural extension, credit, marketing) but also providing the infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.) that makes life in our farms, villages and countryside more pleasant. Easy, or easier said? May be. But unemployment also is not an "easy" national problem and it is really worth the effort, money and sacrifice.

The other field of action is services sectors which are labour-intensive by nature. Tourism is the outstanding example. Given the foreign exchange-saving potential of tourism and our present situation of foreign-exchange stringency, the tourism sector may be now the best candidate to be given priority for the sake of tackling the unemployment problem in the short and medium term. Beyond that, other services sectors can make a valuable contribution.

In our estimation, emphasising agriculture and tourism and giving them due development priority can solve our joblessness headache over a period of not less than a decade. But this needs a dramatic shift in our official economic thinking. The alternative is a continuous national nightmare.

Israel faces ultimate question — land or peace

By Alan Elsner
Reuters

KUALA LUMPUR — In its 43 years of existence, Israel has always professed to yearn for one thing above all others — peace talks with its Arab neighbours.

Now Secretary of State James Baker is putting that claim to the ultimate test.

"I think that this is a moment of historic opportunity," Mr. Baker told a news conference in Jerusalem before flying to Malaysia for a meeting with Asian foreign ministers.

"For 43 years, Israel has sought direct negotiations with its neighbours and it has been right to do so," he said.

"And now there is a real opportunity to get to those face-to-face negotiations. Israel now has Arab partners willing to engage in direct negotiations."

By lining up all Israel's important allies behind his proposal for an Arab-Israeli peace conference to be followed immediately by bilateral negotiations, Mr. Baker has challenged Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to prove that peace is indeed his top priority.

Mr. Shamir now faces a difficult choice. Whichever way he turns carries grave political risks.

Saying "yes" to Mr. Baker could ignite a political storm in Israel where many of Mr. Shamir's right-wing supporters fear that negotiations with Arabs would inevitably lead to an Israeli withdrawal from territories captured in the 1967 Middle East war.

Mr. Shamir himself has devoted much of his life and all his

political career to the idea of a "greater Israel." He believes the occupied West Bank should remain in Israeli hands for security reasons and many of his followers believe it was bequeathed to the Jews by God.

But saying "no" to Mr. Baker may carry even more serious consequences.

It would expose Israel's stated desire for peace as no more than an empty slogan it would alienate support for Israel in world public opinion and it would place Israel's relationship with the United States, its chief banker and ally, in grave jeopardy.

It might also mobilise Israel's silent majority which, according to opinion polls, has always favoured peace talks with Arabs if there were any Arabs ready to talk.

One advantage of Mr. Baker's latest mission was that with Arab agreement to attend talks in his pocket, he was able for the first time to engage Israeli public opinion. In his Jerusalem news conference, he was clearly appealing to ordinary Israelis above the heads of their leaders.

In these circumstances, U.S. officials believe Mr. Shamir will eventually say "yes" though the answer may be a qualified one. But these officials believe an unprecedented Middle East peace conference will indeed convene, probably some time in autumn.

"What Mr. Shamir heard Sunday night from Mr. Baker... has made it very difficult for him to reject the American proposal and keep intact American goodwill, so vital for Israel, for the new immigrants and for the ruling Likud Party," wrote Akiva



Eldar, diplomatic correspondent of Israel's liberal Ha'aretz newspaper.

"For the first time, Shamir appeared to realise that he could no longer rely on Arab rejectionism and that he had to make a move."

Mr. Baker succeeded in persuading Arab states like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and most of all Israel's arch-enemy Syria to back his proposal for many reasons, not least his persistence and astuteness in

crafting a process that fit in with Israel's long-stated demands.

He said the U.S. effort had been designed to do three things: produce direct negotiations, construct a process acceptable to Israel and to foster a positive climate for negotiations.

"In our view we have done all three," he said.

But there were also deeper geopolitical realities. The emergence of the United States as the world's only superpower and the

decline in Soviet power helped persuade Syria to join a process that promised a new relationship with Washington.

The U.S. victory in the Gulf war removed Iraq as a radical Arab voice with real influence that could have focused and channelled rejectionist opinion in the Arab World.

It also created a debt of gratitude to Washington for Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other oil-rich Gulf states while almost totally discrediting the Palestine

Liberation Organisation.

With the PLO out of the way, Israel no longer had an excuse to avoid negotiations with local Palestinian leaders from the occupied territories.

The conference itself, should it take place, will inaugurate negotiations that are bound to be long and difficult.

But Mr. Baker now believes he has real momentum. Once the parties are around the table, he believes, nothing in the Middle East will ever be the same again.

Question Glaspie's superiors

By Leslie H. Gelb

NEW YORK — The real blunder in the fateful weeks before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was not Ambassador April Glaspie but President George Bush, and/or top aides acting in his name. The senators who are about to investigate the matter should look beyond the weak messenger to the senders and their message.

Here is what is now evident based on the previously secret telegrams that flashed between Washington and Baghdad one year ago.

First, as Mr. Saddam Hussein's threats against Kuwait mounted, the State Department instructed Ms. Glaspie to give the Iraqis a conciliatory message punctuated with a few indirect but significant warnings.

Second, Ms. Glaspie apparently omitted the warnings and simply slobbered all over Mr. Hussein in their meeting on July 25, while the Iraqi leader threatened Kuwait anew.

Third, on July 28, just days before the Iraqi attack, Mr. Bush responded to Mr. Hussein with an echo of the weak Glaspie line. The response lacked even the hints of steel present in the original State Department instructions and, inexplicably, did not mention the 100,000 Iraqi troops spotted on the border.

This all becomes public now as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, with the long-sought telegrams finally in hand, is poised to skewer Ms. Glaspie. The coming confrontation was triggered last fall when Iraq released a transcript of the Glaspie-Saddam conversation that contained no U.S. warnings.

Summoned before the committee to explain, Ms. Glaspie denied the transcript's accuracy and insisted that she had been tough. Next time, she will stand by that line and say that her telegram, which often contradicts her testimony, focused on Mr. Hussein's thinking and not on her tough

rejoinders. Committee members will find that hard to believe. Her telegram is virtually identical in substance to the Iraqi transcript. And she never flagged the incompleteness of her telegram in previous testimony.

Ms. Glaspie deserves a strong reprimand for her misleading testimony, but the more important story is in the other telegrams.

"On July 28, the State Department wired what it identified as a message to President Saddam from President Bush. State's Arab experts wrote it, no one seems to recall who approved it or if Mr. Bush saw it. 'We believe that differences are best resolved by peaceful means,' it said. 'We will also continue to support our other friends in the region.'"

On July 19, State asked Ms. Glaspie to stress friendship with Iraq but also said that the United States was "committed to ensure the free flow of oil from the Gulf and to support the sovereignty and integrity of the Gulf states." Indirect, but good. It went on: "We will continue to defend our vital interests in the Gulf." Better still. It added a nice touch about being "strongly committed to supporting the individual and collective self-defence of our friends in the Gulf...."

These points had all been made

the day before by a midlevel State Department official to Iraq's ambassador in Washington. Not exactly a power channel.

A second State cable on July 24 called on Ms. Glaspie to reiterate the standard line about America having "no position" on Arab border disputes, and to warn that settlement of disputes by force was "contrary to U.N. Charter principles." An unexplained softening from the July 19 cable.

Then came the Glaspie cable of July 25, in which she apparently neglected to note U.S. readiness to support the sovereignty of Gulf states and the vital U.S. interests there. "In the spirit of friendship," she asked President Saddam why his troops were on the Kuwait border. Her toughest line.

On July 28, State wired what it identified as a message to President Saddam from President Bush. State's Arab experts wrote it; no one seems to recall who approved it or if Mr. Bush saw it. "We believe that differences are best resolved by peaceful means," it said. "We will also continue to support our other friends in the region."

Nothing about vital interests, protection of sovereignty, the 100,000 Iraqi troops hovering over Kuwait. Why? Why this further softening in the president's name just as things were heating up? Why never once in this period did a senior administration official deliver a tough warning?

On Feb. 11, almost a month into the war, Secretary of State James Baker was asked if war might have been prevented by strong warnings. "Maybe, you might be able — yes, absolutely," he answered. But that would take "20-20 hindsight," he put in. Or maybe Mr. Bush and his top aides were blinded by their "friendly" mind-set toward President Saddam and by their inattention to a situation they did not comprehend — until there was no choice but war — The New York Times.

Sudan forges ahead with Islamic revolution

By Andrew Hill
Reuters

KHARTOUM — Side by side, the radical leaders of Sudan and Libya bulldozed the gates of Khartoum's notorious Kobar jail this month in a gesture symbolising their common hatred of colonialism and oppression.

Libyan President Muammar Qadhafi was the first to smash through the gates of the British-built prison as Sudan's military ruler, Omar Hassan Al Bashir, announced that all 1,300 inmates would be freed.

The July 1 event made dramatic pictures and gave Sudan's impoverished people something to smile about.

What worries foreign governments, however, is not what the two states are destroying, but what they might build.

Two years after he seized power in an army coup, Lieutenant General Bashir has set Sudan on a radical Islamic course which has cast it adrift from former allies and backers, including Arab and Western governments.

Mr. Qadhafi and Gen. Bashir say they are planning a merger, described by Gen. Bashir as the single most outstanding achievement in Khartoum's relations with the Arab World.

Some diplomats are puzzled by the friendship — Mr. Qadhafi has jailed fundamentalists in his own country.

But they see it as part of Mr. Qadhafi's plan to secure allies on his frontiers to pursue his dream of an Islamic Africa through a proxy in Chad. "Chad is the Islamic dagger poised at the heart of Africa," said one diplomat who follows Libyan politics.

Gen. Bashir's other success, he said at celebrations marking the second anniversary of his coming to power on June 30, was to declare Islamic Sharia law over the country of 26 million, about a third of whom are non-Muslims.

"Islam, with its own political, economic and social philosophy, represents the basis of ultimate justice as it is the religion of moderation, tolerance and equality. Islam protects the dignity of man as a social being," he said.

His words delight the Muslim Brotherhood, from which the government draws much of its support.

But they alarm Arab and Western governments who see Khartoum as a link in a chain of Islamic fundamentalist activism stretching from Mauritania on Africa's northwest shoulder to the Iranian capital, Tehran and beyond.

Ripples from the Gulf conflict continue to break on the banks of the Nile. Gen. Bashir's government condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait but was equally critical of the Saudi and U.S.-led intervention that ended it.

Sudan's relations with Iraq have, if anything, warmed since the war. So too have ties with Iran, Libya and Yemen.

Arab and Western states have cut off aid as a result, Gen. Bashir said. He gave no figures, but Western estimates put the amount lost this year at \$300 million, a large sum for a country which is among the poorest in the world and where 7.5 million people are close to starvation.

Western envoys say they are bewildered by the new government. "It's difficult to know sometimes whether this is a government pushing religion or religion pushing the state," said one Western ambassador. "Sometimes we don't know who we are really dealing with."

Diplomats agree that Hassan Al Turabi, head of the radical National Islamic Front (NIF), wields enormous power although he is not a member of the Revolutionary Command Council.

Political and trade unions parties are outlawed. But NIF influ-

ence is believed to be responsible for the replacement of long-serving civil servants by fundamentalists.

"It's very difficult to get any kind of position these days unless you are a (Muslim) brother or a sister," said one disgruntled Sudanese.

Political discussion, once lively, is hushed. Few Sudanese want to divulge their names in any political analysis.

"Security is all pervasive. There are three branches of it and they are very, very good. They watch all the time. I cannot see another coup happening here," said a military envoy.

An indication of the strength of Sudan's Islamic fervour will be the way in which Sharia is carried out.

It has a direct bearing on the non-Muslim south, where rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have been locked for eight years in war against brothers domination.

The government says stonog, amputation and beheading, the punishments of Sharia, do not apply in the south under a federal system it instituted early this year.

But this, and an offer of peace talks, have failed to bring SPLA leader John Garang to the negotiating table.

Western governments credit Gen. Bashir's administration with trying to talk peace, but see little prospect of it as long as Gen. Garang continues to fight for a secular state.

They also credit the government with ending personal corruption in a widespread cleanup, and of freeing hundreds of political prisoners, including former Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi, who was toppled by Gen. Bashir.

But other political prisoners remain — some of them still held in Kobar, the jail that Mr. Qadhafi and Gen. Bashir symbolically "demolished."

Baker awaits Israeli reply

(Continued from page 1)

of face-to-face bilateral talks that Israel said it had wanted for years.

The United States is keen to issue an invitation to the peace conference together with the Soviet Union at next week's summit, but Mr. Baker said this was not a deadline for an Israeli response.

"We are not setting deadlines. There are no deadlines. We would like it possible to receive an answer by that time. But if that's not possible, that's not an absolute deadline," he said.

Mr. Shamir's right-hand man meanwhile expressed speculation that the Jewish state would bow to U.S. pressure to accept the peace plan.

Yossi Ben-Aharon, Mr. Shamir's closest adviser and a staunch opponent of Israeli exchanging occupied territory for peace, said the issues which scuttled Washington's earlier peace plans still remained, including the make-up of a Palestinian delegation at any peace conference.

"Heaven forbid we should find ourselves sitting opposite representatives who are the PLO," Mr. Ben-Aharon told army radio.

Mr. Shamir, a right winger who has consistently demanded the right of veto over the composition of a Palestinian peace team, hinted after the visit by Mr. Baker Monday he might eventually say "yes" to

Washington.

But Mr. Ben-Aharon said the Jewish state had to tread carefully.

"I would say there are developments from which one may draw some encouragement but we are speaking of the survival of the state of Israel and its future so we must be cautious."

"We cannot give an answer as yet for the simple reason that the picture itself as the Americans presented it is not yet complete."

President George Bush wants Israel to respond before the summit in Moscow next week, White House National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft said Monday.

Mr. Scowcroft said Israel had used delaying tactics to avoid peace talks in the past but that such manoeuvres would be unacceptable this time.

Israeli political commentators believe it will be difficult for Mr. Shamir to say "no" and risk angering Washington, its main ally and banker.

Israel is to ask the U.S. for \$10 billion in loan guarantees in September to settle Soviet Jewish newcomers.

Some commentators believe the shrewd 75-year-old leader will give a "yes" to the conference but ensure that it never exacts any real concessions from Israel.

Mr. Ben-Aharon said the Americans were working on the composition of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which Israel could accept.

Nothing to live for in Gaza

By Katia Sabet

GAZA STRIP — This time of the year the first sight that greets travellers at Israel's Ben Gurion airport is a mass of brilliantly coloured flowers, which flank the freeway as it heads into town. The road passes through well-kept suburbs where apartment blocks are topped with solar panels to trap the sun's energy. Further on, the landscape gives way to orange groves, with fields of golden wheat stretching as far as the eye can see.

Suddenly the view changes. There are no more flowers and the well-surfaced highway gives way to a badly-kept road full of pot-holes. Behind a road-block manned by soldiers armed to the teeth lies another world. Here, the houses are crumbling. There are no solar panels, and in some homes, no running water or heat. At almost every corner are barricades of oil drums, piled about 5-metre-high. The stench of uncollected garbage hovers in the dusty streets.

This is the Gaza Strip, a ribbon of land 41 kilometres long and 8 kilometres wide, sandwiched between Israel and Egypt on the Mediterranean coast, and entirely fenced off by barbed wire. This modern-day ghetto is home to 750,000 Palestinians, who have lived under the occupation of the Israeli army ever since the Arab-Israeli war in 1967.

Conditions have always been tough here, even before the Israelis came. This corner of the world has been plagued by wars as long as anyone can remember. But in recent years, the Arab dwellers have had to get used to new kinds of hardship. To the poverty and illness that plague the eight overcrowded refugee camps are added new iron-fisted rules that tighten the Israeli grip on the territory but also push the population to the limit of endurance. The 8 p.m. curfew and a maze of rules covering every facet of daily life have brought unemployment to 50 per cent of the working-age population, while educational opportunities are practically non-existent.

"We have a lot of problems here," said Klaus Worm, director

general of the United Nations' refugee organisation, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in the Gaza Strip. "The Gulf war has made the situation even more desperate. An unemployment rate of between 40 and 50 per cent would create difficulties in any country, but all the more so here, where the situation has never been very bright."

Long considered, and managed, as a reservoir of cheap, uneducated labour by the Israelis, the occupied territories as a whole, and Gaza in particular, are denied even this economic opportunity now. The Palestinian uprising and the Gulf war have severed the remaining ties between the Jewish and Arab communities, while the financial aid given to Palestinians by wealthy Arabs dried up after the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat expressed support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. "There is a feeling of fear in Israel with regard to Palestinian workers," said Mr. Worm. "The municipalities that used to employ them, as road-sweepers or garbage collectors, have stopped doing so. Of the 80,000 Palestinians who used to travel into Israel every day for work, only about 20,000 continue to do so."

In the Gaza Strip, there is little to fall back on. There are no factories here. "The big companies are not interested in investing in the Gaza Strip," said Mr. Worm. "And even supposing we did manage to find someone who was prepared to set up a factory here, he would first have to steer his way through all the obstacles deliberately placed in his way by the Civil Administration, a routine which can easily cause delays of several years."

To illustrate his point, Mr. Worm cites the example of a new slaughterhouse in the strip, built by the Palestinian Shawa family, a prominent family in the area. "It took three years to get permission to build it," said Mr. Worm. Throwing up a barrage of bureaucratic rules and regulations is one of the most successful tactics used by Israel in what Palestinians, and some outsiders, claim is a deliberate scorched

earth policy in the occupied territories. For example, Israel refuses to import vegetables from the Gaza Strip, and tonnes of the zone's main export — citrus fruit — are spoilt each year en route to markets in Jordan and Europe, because Israeli checks and hold-ups delay their journey.

Since the Gulf war ended, Israeli occupation authorities in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have begun confiscating land from Palestinian farmers at a rate unprecedented since the 1967 war. Some analysts see it as a punishment for the Palestine Liberation Organisation's support of Iraq. Others believe it may be a last land-grab before Israel is pressured into talks on giving up land for peace.

For the new generation of Palestinians, the devastating impact of the closure of all universities and most schools by the Israeli administration is just beginning to come to light. Students who try to escape by going abroad to complete their education face further problems. "Even if they are granted an exit visa, they will not be allowed back into Gaza for three years," said a Palestinian who works for UNRWA and who spoke on condition of anonymity. "In the face of such regulations, most people are forced to abandon their travel plans for financial reasons."

Increased unemployment results in more dependence on the already stretched welfare system, almost entirely funded by foreign aid. UNRWA officials report a vast increase in requests for food and medical assistance. "People can no longer afford to pay a doctor," said one official. With an annual UNRWA budget of just \$56 million, there are likely to be more hardships in the future.

The Gaza Strip is the place where the intifada started. A street corner here marks the spot where the rebellion began three and a half years ago. It was triggered by an incident that at any other time might have gone almost unnoticed — a car accident involving Israeli soldiers in which four Palestinians died. But tensions were high, the time was

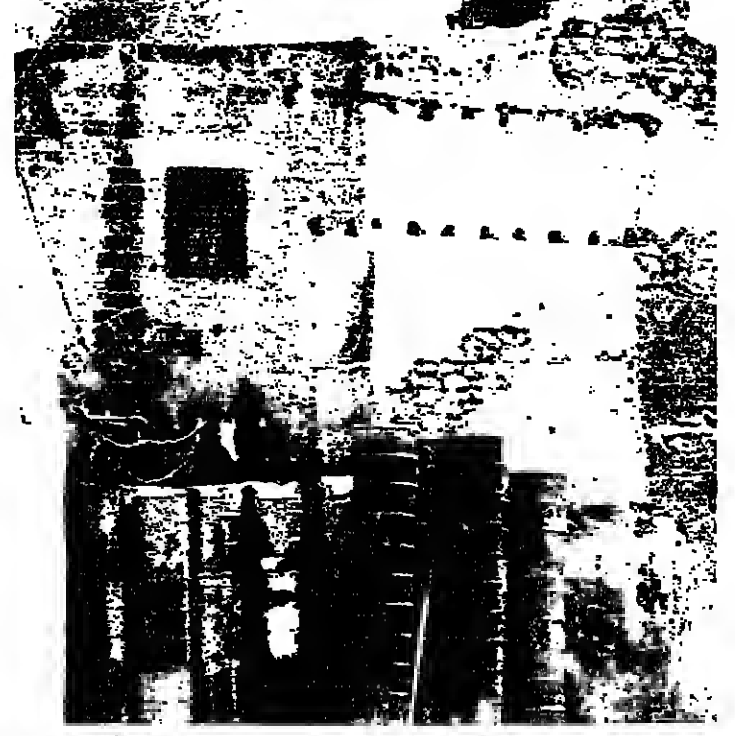
ripe, and the event sparked off a popular revolt which came to involve the whole community.

But what began as a stone-throwing protest against the occupation army has now lost its direction, say local Palestinian leaders. The well-disciplined rebellion which brought admiration and sympathy from all over the world for the plight of the Palestinians has begun degenerating into a type of urban gang warfare, in which Arab youths have taken to killing each other.

Human rights groups monitoring the region say groups of youths wielding knives, axes and sometimes guns have accounted for the death of as many as 30 other young Palestinians in the territories since April. Sometimes the killings result from rivalries between factions of the PLO and Hamas, the Islamic resistance movement. Sometimes the victims have been accused of collaboration with the Israelis. Many of the bodies show signs of torture and mutilation. But often the executions have been carried out for no reason. The occupied territories appear to have bred a generation of youths who are so filled with hatred that it no longer matters which way it is directed.

Some Palestinian moderates say it is time to turn away from violence and channel energies into more creative and pressing areas, such as shaping an infrastructure for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and working to establish industry and education there. At a meeting in June, Palestinian intellectuals and political activists warned against what one of them called the "militarisation" of the intifada and claimed children and young teenagers should be banned from taking part in the revolt. They also suggested calling an end to the 43-month-old, half-day strike by Arab shopkeepers, maintaining it was time to build a new economic future for the occupied territories.

But here in the Gaza Strip, where almost every youth has spent some time in an Israeli jail or prison camp, and where many have a brother, a father or a cousin still behind bars, people



Home to 750,000 Palestinians crammed into eight refugee camps, Gaza looks like a war zone, with streets blocked with oil drums by the Israeli army. (WNL)

mood is too bitter for them to listen to pleas for moderation. "We no longer have any confidence," said a 22-year-old who spent two months in the Israeli Naqurah prison camp, one of the toughest. "Our only hope is to push the entire situation to extremes."

"We've reached the stage where moderation is considered treachery," said another who is 24 and whose brother is in prison: his father was killed in 1969. "We only have the extreme right and the extreme left. If you try to remain in the centre, you risk being condemned as a collaborator or a traitor." A week earlier, Ghassan, a 30-year-old friend, was murdered. He was killed by another Arab, whom Ghassan had been sent to execute as a collaborator. The other Palestinian was also armed, and he pulled his gun first.

Ghassan's friends discuss his death dispassionately. "The people who sent Ghassan on his mission, without studying the situation properly and training

him sufficiently are criminals and idiots who should themselves be shot," said one. "That's no way to organise a punitive mission."

The youths show the same listless and despairing attitude in their discussions of the effects of the Gulf war and its significance for their future. Unlike Palestinians living abroad, many of whom continue to back Mr. Arafat's decision to support Mr. Saddam Hussein, young Arabs in the occupied territories say they believe it was a terrible mistake. The prospects of a peaceful settlement and a homeland for the Palestinians are more remote than ever, they say.

"I've always been against the occupation of Kuwait," said a 25-year-old physiotherapy student. "How could I approve of the invasion of a country when my own has been occupied? Saddam has destroyed everything, his people, and all that we had achieved with world public opinion through the intifada. Ours is a people that is dying." — World News Links.

Lebanese fire at Israeli planes

(Continued from page 1)

on July 1. After a four-day clash, Palestinian fighters agreed to surrender their weapons and cooperate with the army, which pledged to protect the 500,000 Palestinian civilians in refugee camps across the country.

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens Tuesday demanded the Lebanese army confiscate guerrilla guns to bring peace to South Lebanon.

Visiting Israel's self-declared "security zone," in South Lebanon, Mr. Arens ruled out Israeli talks with Syria to bring peace to the south, saying this could only be agreed between Israel and Beirut.

Arens told reporters in the town of Marjayoun: "The Lebanese army faces an important mission and that is to confiscate weapons from the (Palestinian) groups and Hizbollah. "When the Lebanese army receives these weapons, that might lead to calm, I think there will not be calm until the Lebanese army completes its mission."

Mr. Arens was accompanied by Israeli army chief Ehud Barak. Hizbollah has stepped up its raids on Israeli forces in South Lebanon. Israel hit back with air raids and reinforced its strength in the south.

Asked whether an agreement with Syria on South Lebanon was possible if Israel agreed on the

future of the Golan Heights, Mr. Arens said the two issues were separate.

"And if any talks (on South Lebanon) take place they will be with the Lebanese government, said Mr. Arens. Any talks with Syria would only be on peace between Israel and Syria, he added.

Israel has refused to withdraw its troops from Lebanon until all foreign forces, including some 40,000 Syrians, withdraw. Lebanon wants Washington to put pressure on Israel to leave.

Mr. Arens said U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's latest proposals for Arab-Israeli talks contained points which made Israel optimistic and Israel would study them before replying.

Asked about the future of the Golan Heights and the "security zone" in Lebanon, Mr. Arens said: "The talks with Syria will tackle private issues connected with Syria and Israel and not other parties. The treaty will be built on these foundations."

He welcomed Lebanese participation in any Arab-Israeli talks but negotiations would not necessarily concern South Lebanon.

He said he saw no link between U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, which demands an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, and other resolutions calling for an Israeli pullout from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Washington reconsidering sanctions

(Continued from page 1)

He suggested Baghdad be allowed to sell some oil to import food, medicine, agricultural items and equipment needed to restore war-damaged water, sewage, electrical, oil industry and communications facilities.

His report said Iraq had the capacity to export about one million barrels of oil a day, enough to raise about \$5.5 billion over a year.

"I have no reason to doubt that there is an impending serious shortage of food and medicine in Iraq which we have all got to address," Mr. Hannay told reporters.

Noting that sanctions on foodstuffs were lifted in March and that medicines were never under sanctions, he added, "there is now a problem about financing that and we'll have to look at it."

We are not in any aspects in agreement with some aspects of the report but on the foodstuffs and the medicine and questions of public hygiene, I think there is a general consensus."

The U.N. Security Council's Sanctions Committee was briefed Monday about the plight of Iraqi civilians but did not decide on the proposal to let Iraq sell oil to pay for food and other supplies.



A grade school run by Mary Khass in the Bureij refugee camp is among the few educational facilities still open in Gaza. (WNL)



Mr. Klaus Worm, director of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency in Gaza, estimates the unemployment rate at close to 50 per cent. (WNL)

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Letko of U.S., Italy's D'Urso follow different paths to gold

SHEFFIELD, England (Agencies) — Anne Marie Letko took seven seconds off her best time in only her third race of the year to the gold medal Monday in 10,000 metres at the World Junior Games.

The 22-year-old Rutgers University student broke from the field in the second of the 25 laps at the Don Valley Stadium and was never caught as she turned in a time of 32:36.87.

By contrast, Italy's Giuseppe D'Urso waited until the last few seconds to snatch his victory.

From fifth place with 40 metres to go, D'Urso stormed through a pack of runners for a dramatic finish and the gold medal in the 800 metres.

Off the track, the U.S. men's and women's basketball teams both made their finals. The men's team breezed past Israel 89-59 to earn a clash with Canada while the women flopped past China 79-97 and now meet Spain for the gold.

American teams also advanced to the finals in water polo and men's volleyball.

The water polo team downed Italy 6-4 and plays China for the gold medal while the volleyball squad edged the Soviets 3-2 on sets to advance to a match with Poland in Tuesday's final.

The American track team collected two golds as well as three bronzes on the track as more impressive performances followed Sunday's 100-metre sprint double by Michael Bates and Christine Gaines.

Maicol Malone won the women's 400 metres in 50.65

seconds, while bronzes went to javelin thrower Paula Berry, Jasmijn Jones in the 800 metres and Marlin Cannon in the men's 400 metres.

Cutting her previous best time by seven seconds wasn't enough for Letko, who is slated to compete at the World Championships in Tokyo next month.

"With Tokyo coming up, I thought I could have run a little faster," she said. "It's hard to do running alone, but I wanted to be closer to 32 minutes."

Malone finished 1.41 seconds ahead of second place German Gretha Tromp, while the gap between Tromp and the last runner was only 1.60.

"I knew the other girls were good, so I didn't expect to win so easily," said Malone, who will run on the U.S. 1,600-metre relay team in Tokyo.

Berry heaved the javelin 58.28 metres (191 feet, 2 inches) in her last throw to finish third after being lodged in eighth place after five of the six.

The gold went to Soviet thrower Tatiana Shikolenko with 63.56 metres (208 feet, 6 inches) and Cuban Isel Lopez won the silver with 62.32 metres (204 feet, 5 inches).

A Soviet world record holder took the field Monday although not in her favoured event.

Inessa Kravets said she was too tired to take part in Saturday's triple jump. But she leaped 6.33 metres (20 feet, 9 1/4 inches) with her first long jump to qualify for the final with the best mark.

In women's basketball,

Carolyn Jones scored 23 points and Judy Mosely added 20 as the United States subdued China 79-76 to gain a place against Spain.

"This game was back and forth and could have gone either way, but our players responded very well at the end," coach Tara Van Derveer said.

"It wasn't the prettiest game, but we got it done underneath," said Mosely, who grabbed 12 rebounds.

Kyle Kopp and Kirk Everist each scored twice to put the American water polo team into the final.

In the other semifinal, China beat Australia 10-6.

In a see-sawing volleyball semifinal against the Soviets, the American team won 15-11, 11-15, 15-9, 7-15, 15-9, while Poland whipped Algeria 15-2, 15-7.

Meanwhile, former javelin world record holder Steve Backley expects to throw over 90 metres for the first time this year when he defends his World Student Games title Thursday.

But he is not aiming to reclaim the record.

Briton Backley said Tuesday trying to set new marks with the latest aerodynamically-assisted javelins was a lottery and he placed more value on winning gold than breaking the 96.96 metres record set by Finland's Seppo Ratty last month.

"The record is not my main objective. Winning this title and the World Championship are more important," said the European and Commonwealth champion who was sidelined for two

weeks last month with a thigh injury.

"I am in good shape now to throw a long way. I am confident of throwing 90 metres and that should be enough to win here."

"The atmosphere in the team village is electric and that will carry over into the stadium, so getting psyched up will be no problem."

Backley, who held the record last year with a throw of 90.98 metres using a Nemeth javelin, said the latest models with roughened tails were unpredictable.

"The rough-tails are more of a lottery. Some days it goes, some days it doesn't and I can't work out why," he said.

"There are times when I have everything right on release and I look up to see my javelin falling from the sky. It's very disillusioning."

"So that puts more emphasis on winning championships where everyone can pick from the pool of javelins and the guy who wins is the best thrower."

Earlier this month he said the event was being devalued by technological advances and called for a halt to changing specifications of the javelins. Setting records had lost its credibility, he said.

Backley, whose throw of 88.46 metres last Friday in Edinburgh ranks him third in the world this year behind Ratty and Czechoslovak Jan Zeleny, is unlikely to come under pressure from his opponents here but insisted it would not be a one-man show.

Maleeva sisters win singles, doubles at Federation Cup

NOTTINGHAM, England (AP) — The Maleeva clan of Bulgaria is turning the Federation Cup into a family affair.

Sisters Katerina and Magdalena Maleeva won singles matches and then teamed together to win the doubles as Bulgaria defeated Hungary 3-0 Monday in a first-round match — much to the delight of coach and mother Yulia Berberian-Maleeva.

Bulgaria once had another Maleeva sister playing on its team, but Manuela married a Swiss man and changed her citizenship. She was scheduled to play Tuesday for the seventh-seeded Swiss team against Argentina.

"Two is enough for Bulgaria and I'm very proud of Manuela representing Switzerland," said Berberian-Maleeva, once a Federation Cup player herself. "That was her destiny."

If the U.S. team of Jennifer Capriati, Zina Garrison, Mary Joe Fernandez and Gigi Fernandez — Fernandez duo are not related — wins its opening against the Netherlands, it would face Bulgaria in the second round.

Berberian-Maleeva said coaching her daughters provides advantages and disadvantages.

"The most difficult thing is that coaching your relatives is like a 24-hour job, seven days a week, 365 days a year," she said.

"The biggest advantage is the same thing. The mentor-mother said she does not have to worry about disciplining her team members or tell them how to prepare for matches."

"I'm the one that listens most of the time, because they are so experienced and they don't need anyone to tell them what to do," she said.



Katerina Maleeva



Manuela Maleeva

Another player with a Federation Cup family album is Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan, who won her singles match Monday but could not prevent Australia from eliminating the Japanese 2-1.

Sawamatsu's mother and aunt also were Federation Cup players.

The only opening-day upset was Poland's 2-1 victory over sixth seed France. Nathalie Tauziat, ranked 14th worldwide, lost in singles and in doubles with Mary Pierce.

Other winning nations Monday were Finland, Indonesia, China, Canada and the Soviet Union.

Italian Lietti hurt in Tour de France accident

GAP, France (AP) — Italy's Marco Lietti, winner of Monday's stage of the Tour de France, was seriously hurt in an accident en route to the start of Tuesday's stage in the Alps.

Lietti, 27, struck a child who ran into the path of his bike, then crashed into a small truck that was part of the tour entourage, witnesses said.

According to preliminary reports, Lietti suffered a broken collarbone. He was taken to a hospital for treatment. Lietti, 75th in the overall standings, won by two seconds over American Greg Lemond on Monday, the 16th of 22 stages.

Meanwhile reports of Lemond's demise may have been grossly exaggerated.

Down from a fall and almost out after some exhausting mountain stages, Lemond rebounded with a surprise breakaway in the final 15 kilometres of the 16th leg. It showed he is not to be counted out — yet.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Rush to miss start of English season

LONDON (R) — Liverpool striker Ian Rush has an Achilles injury and will miss the start of the English League soccer season next month, his club said Monday. Rush will be in plaster for the next four to six weeks and is expected to need a further two weeks to gain match fitness. The 26-year-old player, scorer of over 300 goals in his professional career, first picked up the injury in June in Wales's 1-0 win over Germany in a European Championship Group 5 game. Liverpool, runners-up to Arsenal in the League last season, begin the new campaign with a home against newly-promoted Oldham Athletic on Aug. 17.

China, Oman draw in Asian Club soccer

DHAKA (AP) — China's Liaoning Football Club drew 1-1 with the Al Nasr Club of Oman in the 10th Asian Club Championship 90 Soccer Tournament Monday. Oman took an early lead through an astute grounder by Muhammad Ali who shot from top of the box in the 31st minute of play. China, the defending champions, netted an equalizer through Gao Xu in the 78th minute. Gao dribbled past two opponents to score a spectacular goal. Seven teams — one each from Iran, China, Indonesia, Oman, North Korea, Thailand and Bangladesh qualified for the last round of the tournament. Jordan, the eighth team to qualify, backed out of the championship before it resumed on July 19. The tournament began in 1990 but was deferred because of the Gulf conflict that led to war early this year. The competing teams are the top soccer clubs in their respective countries, giving the tournament its name.

Faber defeats Moras in New York

PURCHASE, N.Y. (AP) — Donna Faber, the seventh seed, overtook Christina Moras 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 in the first round of the \$100,000 Westchester Ladies Cup on Monday. Faber, a semifinalist at the Australian Open in January, blamed her opening set loss on poor serves. "I made a lot of mistakes returning serves in the first set," said the 20-year-old American. "Give Christina credit, she took advantage of my errors." In the second set, Faber was able to get my first serves in, and that enabled me to take command of the match.

Muster ousts Cherkasov

HILVERSUM, Netherlands (AP) — Unseeded Thomas Muster of Austria crushed third-seeded Soviet Andrei Cherkasov 6-3, 6-3 in the first round of the Dutch Open ATP Tournament Monday. Thierry Champion of France staged the day's other upset, beating seventh-seeded Argentinian Guillermo Perez-Roldan 6-4, 3-6, 7-6. In other play court action at the Melkhuise Tennis Centre, No. 5-seeded Goran Pripic of Yugoslavia defeated Karsten Braasch of Germany, 6-3, 7-6.

Caratti eliminated in Canadian Open

MONTREAL (AP) — Canadian Chris Pridham has defeated 11th seeded Cristiano Caratti of Italy in the first round of the \$1.2 million Canadian Open. Caratti was the first seed to fall in the tournament. Pridham defeated Caratti 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 Monday. The Italian had won this year over Ivan Lendl, Jimmy Connors and John McEnroe. In another first-round match, ninth-seeded Richey Reneberg beat Tim Mayotte 6-3, 6-1. The tournament's top eight seeds don't play until the second round starts Wednesday. For Caratti, it was his first hard-court match in four months and it showed. Pridham led 3-0 in the first set and held serve to win. Caratti held through the second set and had a 5-3 lead in the third before he came ondone.

In The Groove withdrawn from King George

LONDON (R) — In The Groove will not run in Saturday's King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes at Ascot, the horse's trainer David Elsworth said Tuesday. Elsworth said the horse had failed to impress in her final pre-race gallop and was "below par." Snurge, last year's English St. Leger winner, was withdrawn from the race Monday. Generous, winner of the Epsom Derby and the Irish Derby this year, remains a clear favourite for Saturday's King George.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY JULY 24, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be off and away to those places or with those persons who mean the most to you but don't allow a fellow associate to feel you are shirking some duty of yours.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You need to consider what your obligations actually are and then to carry through with them until they are completed today and then tonight be romantic.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Sidelink the family now and make sure you do find out what partners expect of you and reach a new agreement with them through conversations.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) The many duties facing you are your right outlet now so get at them and put off those outside errands until a later and better time.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever makes you feel you do not have enough money should be studiously suppressed and you should spend every available moment enjoying yourself.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have some fascinating ideas but it is not good since your family expects a great deal of you so put off what you want to do and go along with their wishes.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get away from that private anxiety that has been taking so much of your time and see to it that you get out and make new strides into the world of action.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is your time to show you can step aside from the opportunities of friends and stick to the practical problems that are now facing you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever personal ideas want expression is fine now so make sure that you do avoid that higher-up which is so demanding and have fun.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is the day to avoid new interests and to clear up what you have promised to do even though you feel pretty restricted by so doing.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is your time to live the gracious Aquarius part of your nature and character and to do nothing that can bring you any criticism.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get away from that critical partner that has so many comments to make and attend to worldly interests that require ex-actness and a sense of civic responsibility.

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JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Hent Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

REWAY

FEASH

HERNUT

CLISHE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

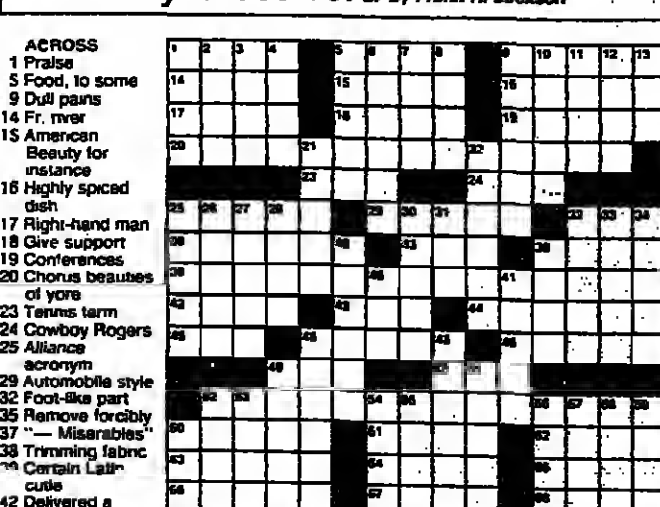
Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DELVE THICK CACTUS RACIAL

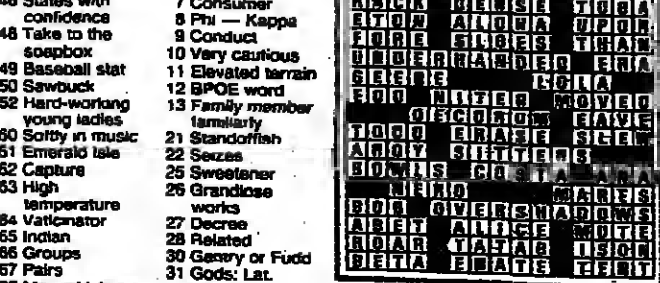
Answer: What happened to the horse named "Poison" by "T" IT WAS "SCRATCHED"

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



1 Hang round
2 Seed covering
3 Disassemble
4 Bamblun
5 Student's concern
6 Androids
7 Consumer
8 Ptu Kappa
9 Conduct
10 Very cautious
11 Elevated terrain
12 BPOE word
13 Family member
14 Standoffish
15 Seizes
16 Sweetener
17 Grandiose works
18 Decree
19 Related
20 Gamery or Fud
21 Gods: Lat.
22 Worded work
23 Ant old style
24 Gardener's tool
25 Small mites
26 Growl
27 Bambi for one
28 On the way
29 Loathes
30 Sound system
31 Pick up an option
32 Copters
33 Row
34 Possess
35 Remander
36 Pancakes
37 Move slowly
38 — avia
39 Legal claim
40 Recruit for one
41 Army rank: abbr.

Financial Markets

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 22/7/1991	Tel Aviv Close Date: 23/7/1991
Sterling Pound	1.6790	1.6677
Deutsche Mark	1.7620	1.7712
Swiss Franc	1.5255	1.5352
French Franc	5.9815	6.0083
Japanese Yen	137.72	137.52
European Currency Unit	1.1655	1.1613

USD Per STG

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Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.06	6.31	6.62
Sterling Pound	11.06	10.87	10.81	10.66
Deutsche Mark	8.75	9.00	9.25	9.25
Swiss Franc	7.68	7.75	7.75	7.62
French Franc	9.12	9.25	9.31	9.45
Japanese Yen	7.31	7.43	7.25	7.15
European Currency Unit	9.75	9.51	9.57	10.00

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 million dollars, 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	367.45	7.05	Silver	4.33	.10

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.687	.689
Sterling Pound	1.1461	1.1518
Deutsche Mark	.3660	.3699
Swiss Franc	.4479	.4501
French Franc	.1144	.1158
Japanese Yen	.4994	.5019
Dutch Guilder	.3443	.3460
Swedish Krona	.1071	.1076
Italian Lira	.0521	.0524
Belgian Franc	.01901	.01911

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7850	1.7950
Lebanese Lira	.0710	.0790
Saudi Riyal	.1829	.1834
Kuwaiti Dinar		
Qatari Riyal	.1856	.1865
Egyptian Pound	.1900	.2025
Omani Riyal	1.7500	1.7600
UAE Dirham	.1856	.1865
Greek Drachma	.3200	.3400
Cypriot Pound	1.4150	1.4400

CAF Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	21/7/1991 Close	22/7/1991 Close
All-Share	111.03	111.40
Banking Sector	106.28	106.59
Insurance Sector	119.58	119.34
Industry Sector	115.51	115.88
Services Sector	127.42	128.72

December 31, 1990 - 100

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

TOKYO — Shares ended easier to quiet, choppy trade with most investors sidelined by lack of factors and the brokerage scandal. The Nikkei closed down 161.07 points at 22,705.29 with just 160 mln shares traded.

SYDNEY — Australian shares shrugged off three weeks of inactivity, soaring to 11-month high after local and overseas investors rushed to buy leading stocks. The All Ordinaries Index closed up 19.7 points at 1570.3.

HONG KONG — Stocks closed easier after a generally featureless day dominated by profit-taking of property counters. The Hang Seng Index closed down 21.0 points at 3,988.35.

Kuwait lends Syria \$60 m

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Kuwait agreed Monday to lend Syria \$60 million — its third loan to Damascus since the Gulf war — to build a spinning mill in northern Syria.

Officials said Syria's Planning Minister Sabah Bagjaji and Badr Al Humaidhi from the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development signed the agreement. The fund first contributed \$105 million for a Damascus sewage scheme and later a \$35 million loan to help Syrians who fled Kuwait after Iraq's invasion last August.

Mr. Humaidhi also met Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Zu'bi and discussed the fund's role in developing Arab investment projects.

Syria sent at least 15,000 troops to the U.S.-led allied force in the Gulf which drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait at the end of February.

After signing the loan agreement Monday, Mr. Humaidhi said that Kuwait will try to construct 600,000 telephone lines in Syria before the end of the year and will "seek all means to find work opportunities for Syrian workers in Kuwait."

IMF lends India \$0.2 b

WASHINGTON (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Monday that it granted India a \$200 million emergency loan to help the country weather the financial fallout from the Gulf crisis.

The credit is a vote of confidence by the IMF in India's ability to carry out painful economic reforms and should help the cash-strapped country avoid defaulting on its more than \$70 billion in foreign debt.

The IMF said that India has had to pay more for imported oil and has lost revenues from expatriate workers who fled the Gulf since the invasion of Kuwait last August.

New Delhi faces a credit crunch because a collapse in its trade with the Soviet Union and the financial fallout from the Gulf crisis has brought its long-term economic problems of a burgeoning budget deficit and mounting foreign debt to a head.

But the recently-elected minority government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao has tackled those problems head on. Mr. Rao has devalued India's currency twice, raised interest rates and outlined a programme challenging the country's socialist, protectionist orthodoxy since taking office last month.

Suharto renews demand to businessmen to share wealth with the poor

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian President Suharto has told the nation's leading businessmen that if they do not transfer some of their shares to the country's cooperatives, the law will force them.

"We don't want to commit robbery, though if we wanted to it would be easy," the official Antara News Agency Monday quoted the president as saying.

The government would use the law if businessmen did not voluntarily transfer the shares, Mr. Suharto said.

He first made the demand in a speech to the nation in January 1990.

Mr. Suharto told companies to distribute up to 25 per cent of their shares to cooperatives. Many have handed over barely one per cent.

Many economists have attacked the scheme as impractical and see it as a political sop to counter criticism that the fruits of a fast-growing economy have yet to work their way down to most of the population.

In an interview, Mr. Suharto's half-brother Probosutedjo laid the blame on the country's ethnic Chinese, an economically powerful minority, for preventing the spread of wealth to the indigenous masses whose average annual income is little more than \$500.

Mr. Probosutedjo, a prominent businessman, urged ethnic Chinese, who control most of



Suharto

Indonesia's major private companies, to mix with the rest of society and to be loyal to the interests of the nation, not just to money.

Some economists have said the appeal effectively amounts to charity for the country's thousands of largely inefficient cooperatives.

Under the scheme, companies would lend the money to cooperatives to buy their shares and the dividends would be used for repayment.

Mr. Suharto said Indonesia's corporate wealth was a national asset that should be used to replace scarce government funds to develop the nation.

Cetus and Chiron agree to \$660 m biotech merger

EMERYVILLE, California (R) — Chiron Corp. and Cetus Corp., two companies that specialise in high-tech gene-splicing techniques to create sophisticated drugs and vaccines, agreed Monday to the biggest merger ever in the U.S. biotechnology industry.

Their merger, coming in the form of a stock swap, is valued at about \$660 million.

Separately, Cetus said it would sell a powerful drug-making process to J. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd., the Swiss drug giant, for \$300 million, with proceeds going to the merged company.

The merger will combine Cetus, the oldest U.S. biotechnology company, with Chiron, which has headquarters across the street in Emeryville, a small town just over the bay from San Francisco.

The deal will be the biggest in the fast-growing industry since the Swiss parent of Hoffmann-La Roche agreed to buy 60 per cent of Genentech Inc. last year for \$2.1 billion.

Under the merger pact, Chiron will offer to exchange three-tenths of a share for each outstanding Cetus share. The final price may be subject to certain adjustments.

As part of the transaction, Chiron also will assume about

\$145.5 million of Cetus debt. Biotechnology companies use expensive techniques such as recombining pieces of genetic material to create promising, but often costly, new drugs.

The industry's potential value has been slow to become reality because of the long process of genetically engineering new drugs that are not guaranteed commercial success.

The merger in part reflects troubles Cetus has had in meeting the expense of developing new drugs. The company has lost large sums of money every year since 1986.

While Cetus has developed encouraging drug-making technologies and therapies, its Interleukin-2 drug has not won approval from federal regulators.

Paris expects \$7b income from tourism

PARIS (R) — Tourism Minister Jean-Michel Baylet has said he expected France's 1991 tourism earnings to reach 42 billion francs (\$7 billion), equalling last year's record.

Mr. Baylet said in a radio interview the Gulf war had led to an increase in French nationals holidaying at home.

But he added that the number of visitors from Japan and the United States fell, affecting luxury-class hotels in Paris and the Riviera, while fewer French people travelling abroad had caused difficulties for travel agencies in this country.

Oman earns \$5b from oil exports

SMANAMA, Bahrain (R) — Oman's oil income rose sharply in 1990 because of the Gulf crisis, leading to a substantial rise in the sultanate's trade balance.

Central bank figures show oil revenue rose 39.3 per cent in 1990 to 1,934 billion riyals (\$5,036 billion) from 1,388 billion (\$3,615 billion) the previous year.

Oman produces around 700,000 barrels per day of oil and oil income accounts for more than 75 per cent of total revenue.

Oil prices rose to more than \$21 a barrel in the second half of 1990 on fears the Gulf confrontation sparked by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait could lead to a cut in oil supply from major producing countries.

The increase in Oman's oil revenue helped its trade balance rise to 1,034 billion riyals (\$2,693 billion) in 1990 from 646 million (\$1,682 billion) in 1989.

The central bank figures published in Al Markazi Magazine showed total exports and re-exports reached 2,110 billion riyals (\$5,495 billion) in 1990 against 1,556 billion (\$4,052 billion) in 1989.

Total imports reached 1,076 billion riyals (\$2,802 billion) in 1990 compared with 910 million (\$2,370 billion) a year earlier.

Oman Saturday issued its first 10 million riyals (\$26 million) of government development bonds.

The sultanate plans to issue a total of 429 million riyals (\$1,12 billion) of the five-year bonds in 1991-95 to help cover a projected budget deficit. It hopes to raise 137 million riyals (\$357 million) in 1991.

Turkish public workers get 160% pay rise

ANKARA (R) — The wages of about 600,000 Turkish state sector workers soared by 160 per cent Tuesday when Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz stepped in to end a seven-month deadlock over pay, labour officials said.

Government negotiators and the Turk-Is labour confederation which negotiated the huge rise for 1991 also agreed on a 62 per cent hike for the second year of the contracts, Turk-Is Chairman Sevt Yilmaz told Reuters.

"We are satisfied with the result," Mr. Yilmaz said.

Turkey's annual inflation was 64.9 per cent in June.

Labour officials said the deadlock ended soon after Mr. Yilmaz joined the last stages of overnight talks in Ankara.

Workers from vital industries such as energy, oil, mines, railways, highways and defence, had been due to strike from next Monday.

Turkey's 1.5 million civil servants were given six-monthly pay rises averaging 40 per cent early this month, soon after the Yilmaz cabinet took office.

Mr. Yilmaz, who came to power after winning chairmanship of the ruling Motherland Party in June in a bid to boost the party's standing before general elections in 1992, promised to keep pay rises above inflation.

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New audit reveals wide BCCI fraud

LONDON (AP) — The Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) fraudulently concealed several billion dollars in losses for at least 15 years — and may never have been profitable, a newly released audit said.

The report found that the bank, which has been effectively shut down around the world, engaged for years in shady dealings involving phony loans, bribery, unrecorded deposits and the rapid transfer of funds among offices.

The Price Waterhouse audit was commissioned by the Bank of England, which coordinated the seizure of BCCI bank branches starting in early July, and has been seeking to liquidate its assets in Britain.

Portions of the report were made public Monday at a hearing by a high court judge who rebuffed the central bank's plans.

The BCCI seizure has generated headlines over allegations the private financial institution has been used by money launderers, drug lords, terrorists and other criminals. The tiny sheikdom of Abu Dhabi and its ruler, Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan, control 77 per cent of BCCI's shares.

Sky News Television reported Monday that renowned guerrilla Abu Nidal had BCCI accounts in London and that British security officers let him come and go freely to check them because they wanted to monitor how the money was used.

The report quoted a bank branch manager as saying he gave British intelligence details about Abu Nidal's accounts for four years, during which Abu Nidal deposited \$26 million.

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Abu Nidal's followers carried out dozens of attacks in the decade he held the accounts, including the 1985 airports on the Rome and Vienna airports that left 20 people dead.

The Sunday Times reported that Britain's intelligence agencies warned the Bank of England last year that terrorist money was channelled through the bank.

The newspaper also said that BCCI, with principal offices in Luxembourg, Abu Dhabi and the Cayman Islands, may have been used by Islamic Jihad, a Shiite Muslim extremist group believed to be holding Western hostages in Lebanon.

Prime Minister John Major has declined to comment on the Times report.

Parts of the report were made public in court Monday on orders of vice-chancellor, Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, the judge hearing a Bank of England application for prompt liquidation of BCCI's operations.

Gabriel Moss, a lawyer for the Bank of England, advised the court that Price Waterhouse concluded that BCCI, which operated in more than 70 countries at its peak, "may never have been profitable in its entire history."

Mr. Moss said ACCI ran into economic difficulties in the early 80s from substantial bad debts and that between 1977 and 1985, BCCI accrued losses of about \$1.4 billion on its operations.

He said BCCI methods to conceal those losses included fictitious loans and dealing in its own shares through nominees.

The Touche Ross firm of accountants, appointed as provisional liquidators, said in a report that BCCI had a balance sheet shortfall of \$147 million. BCCI's unaudited assets at the end of last year totalled \$12.4 billion, it said.

Sir Browne-Wilkinson, who adjourned the court hearing until July 30, said there was no reason to immediately liquidate the bank's assets.

The move gave hope to the bank's Abu Dhabi majority shareholders and its depositors that a rescue plan could be devised.

The coordinated seizure of BCCI assets stemmed from evidence the Bank of England obtained suggesting systematic fraud and unreported losses, raising concern about the safety of deposits within the bank.

Britain, Canada announce joint ventures in Soviet Union

LONDON (AP) — British and Canadian companies have announced large joint ventures with Soviet partners to develop oil fields and sell computers in the Soviet Union.

ICL said it formed a partnership called ICL-KMECS with Kazan manufacturing enterprise of computer systems, which belongs to the Soviet ministry of radio industry.

KMECS, one of the largest makers of mainframe computers in the Soviet Union, is located in Kazan, the capital of the Tatarstan region, east of Moscow.

ICL has a 60 per cent stake in the venture and its Soviet partner, the remaining 40 per cent, it said.

ICL didn't give a value for the deal or say how many computers it hoped to sell.

British Airways, meanwhile, has been negotiating with the Soviet flag carrier Aeroflot to jointly develop a new airline called Air Russia.

British Gas said the goal of the partnership was to invest one billion Canadian dollars (\$870 million) to develop a new oil field and to increase output from a nearby older field.

The first phase of the multi-phase project would produce up to 20,000 barrels a day within three years, with investments expected to total 200 million Canadian dollars (\$174 million) during that period.

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Yugoslav leaders fear civil war as peace efforts collapse

OHRID, Yugoslavia (R) — Yugoslavia's leaders said Tuesday they feared all-out war after the collapse of peace talks and the worst fighting between rival Serbs and Croats since World War II.

The state presidency, the heads of the six republics and government leaders issued a statement after peace talks in this lakeside resort that made clear they were still divided over how to end violence sweeping breakaway Croatia.

About 20 people were killed in eastern Croatia Monday in fighting between the Roman Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbian minority who oppose the republic's secessionist moves.

Croatian officials said sporadic shooting broke out overnight in eastern Croatia and six National Guardsmen were wounded in an attack in the village of Laslovo. Two bomb explosions were reported in the town of Osijek.

Tanjung News Agency said Croatian police attacked Yugoslav army units early Tuesday near a bridge between the republics of

Serbia and Croatia. The army fired back with artillery but Tanjug mentioned no new casualties.

"Yugoslavia is experiencing its most dramatic moments. Conflicts among its nationalities and confrontations among its republics threaten all its people with civil war and catastrophic consequences," the leaders said in a statement, released after Monday's peace talks.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman stormed out of the Ohrid summit and convened an emergency session of his Supreme Council of military and civilian leaders after failing to persuade the presidency to return the federal army to barracks in Croatia.

He accused federal army officers deployed in Croatia of helping Serbian guerrillas in fighting that has killed scores of people since Croatia declared independence together with the neighbouring republic of Slovenia on June 25.

More than 30 people have been killed in the last four days. "It is a question of solving this critical situation, which is now in

fact one of war," Mr. Tudjman, seething with anger, told Croatian television.

"I address Croatia's people to call on them to be composed and resolute so they do not succumb to further provocations. But they should also be ready to face, within days perhaps, even all-out war in defence of Croatia."

The violence in Croatia and fighting between Slovenia and the federal army which killed 64 people in one week has plunged Yugoslavia into a crisis that threatens the 72-year-old Balkan state with collapse.

Croatia's Supreme Council said further peace talks were possible only if the Serbian-dominated federal army was ready to withdraw from barracks in Croatia, where it is acting as a buffer between Serbs and Croats in the worst flashpoints.

But the Ohrid statement said the country's other leaders flatly rejected an immediate army withdrawal and made clear Mr. Tudjman and Yugoslav President Stipe Mesic, a Croat, had disassociated themselves from the

declaration.

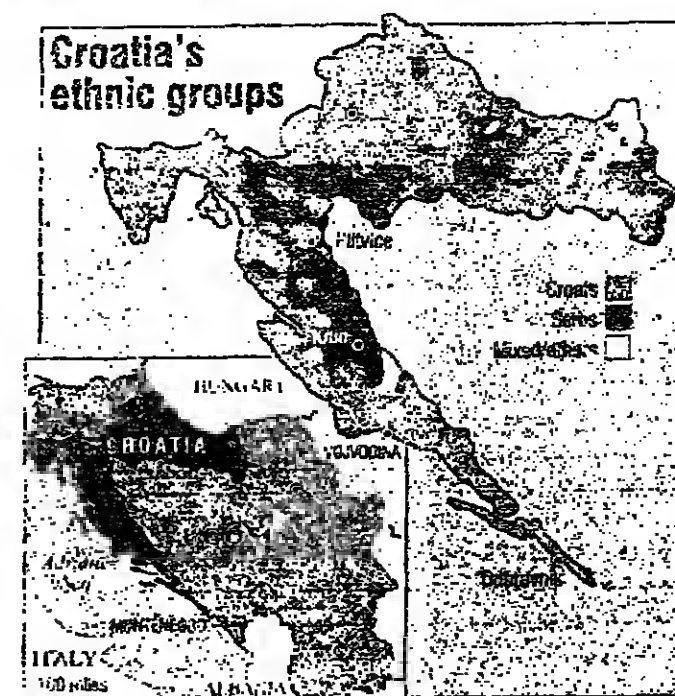
Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov said Monday that all participants at the talks accepted a declaration calling for European Community (EC) observers to work in Croatia and ordering Croatia's illegal paramilitary forces to disband.

Borislav Jovic, Serbia's member of the collective state presidency, told reporters: "If the army pulls out, it could mean large-scale civil war and wading knee-deep through blood."

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic said that even at the eleventh hour, Croatia had insisted on conditions that prevented agreement on how to resolve the crisis.

"Now everyone will have to face the consequences and take responsibility for the fate of their own people," Mr. Milosevic said as he left Ohrid.

Serbs and Croats, who comprise more than half of Yugoslavia's 23.5 million people, are old enemies but violence between them has increased since Croatia declared independence.



Indian opposition demands enquiry into Sikh deaths

NEW DELHI (R) — India's opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Tuesday demanded a judicial inquiry into the deaths of 10 Sikhs said by police to have been militants killed in a shoot-out.

Senior BJP official Madan Lal Khurana said his investigation suggested the Sikhs were taken off a bus during a tour of Sikh holy places in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh on July 12, Indian news agencies reported.

They quoted Mr. Khurana as saying even if the Sikhs were militants, there was no justification for them "being done to death," apparently backing charges by Sikhs that the 10 were summarily executed.

Police in Uttar Pradesh originally reported the 10 were killed in an encounter with security forces well away from Punjab, where militants are fighting for an independent homeland they call Khalistan, or land of the pure.

Mr. Khurana was quoted as saying witnesses had told him 13 men were taken off the bus as it returned to Pilibit near the Nepal border.

Two old men were freed, 10 killed and one, the organiser of the tour, was still missing, he said.

The ever-rising death toll in the Sikh insurgency is concentrated in the rich, northern agricultural state of Punjab, though the violence occasionally spills into New Delhi.

U.S. aide to visit Hanoi to check photo

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — The United States will send a senior official to Vietnam to investigate a mystery photograph purporting to show three American servicemen who went missing in the Vietnam war, a senior U.S. official said Tuesday.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asian Affairs Ken Quinn will go to Vietnam to investigate, the official told reporters.

Relatives of the three Americans in the photograph, who were listed in Vietnamese and U.S. files as killed in plane crashes in the 1960s, said the men were being held alive somewhere

in Cambodia. U.S. records indicate 2,273 American servicemen never made it home alive or dead from the Vietnam war. Of that total, Washington says the fate of only 62 is unresolved, involving men believed to have survived plane crashes or been taken prisoner.

Vietnam says those men are all dead.

The U.S. government still does not talk with Cambodian officials about the fate of Americans lost since the Indochina war and MIA activists actually interfere with the search for servicemen's re-

mains, the head of a war commission said Tuesday.

"We regard this as a humanitarian issue but the United States always sees it as political," Long Visalo, deputy foreign minister and chairman of the Cambodian MIA (missing-in-action) Commission, told Reuters.

The United States refuses to recognise the Vietnamese-backed Phnom Penh government and supports the small non-Communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front, allies of the Khmer Rouge in the 12-year-old civil war here.

ASEAN rejects U.S. call to pressure Burma

KUALA LUMPUR (Agencies) — Six South East Asian Nations Tuesday rejected a U.S. call to pressure the ruling Burmese military to allow people elected in May last year to govern.

"We don't, of course, condone what is happening there," said Thai Foreign Minister Arsa Sarasin. "But, simply, we cannot change them by putting pressure on them."

Mr. Arsa said isolating Burma would not help.

"We feel strongly that we ought to engage them, talk to them, reason with them and (make them) feel that in the future there will be a country that can contribute toward the peace and stability of South East Asia," he said.

Thailand was joined in rejecting the U.S. call for pressure by the five other members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) — The Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei.

Representatives of the countries are conferring in Kuala Lumpur this week with ASEAN's major trade partners.

Robert B. Zoellick, U.S. under secretary of state, told the meeting Monday, "without our efforts, the people of Burma will suffer longer. Undeveloped and undernourished, Burma will poison the region with narcotics and remain a cancer of instability."

Meanwhile Japan has indicated to South East Asian Nations it is ready to play a more prominent role in regional security, but defence analysts say the region may not be ready for Tokyo's higher profile.

"This is a very bold proposal on the part of Japan," said Murugesu Pathmanathan, political scientist at the University of Malaysia. "It reflects a post-Gulf war Japan more willing to be involved in security matters."

Japan's new Socialist leader pledges reform

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Socialists elected a new conservative leader Tuesday in a victory for reformists seeking a drastic overhaul of their party's hardline policies.

"It was a difficult and close election that shows how divided the party is over the issue of reform," a victorious Makoto Tanabe, 69, told reporters.

"It's up to me now to strive to bring the party together on the need of introduce changes," said Mr. Tanabe.

Mr. Tanabe succeeds Takako Doi, the first woman to head a Japanese political party, who resigned because of the Socialists' poor showing in regional elections earlier this year.

His only challenger was Tetsu Ueda, representing the party's left wing. The Socialist Party is Japan's biggest opposition grouping.

Mr. Tanabe, a member of the lower house of parliament for more than 20 years, hopes to lead the Socialists into the post-cold war period by abandoning their opposition to Japan's armed forces and accepting their country's close ties to the United States.

Mr. Tanabe has also said recently that the Socialists must tone down their support for

North Korea and must accept Japan's dependence on the United States for security.

"I think the party realises we can't continue the way we are and there's a lot of work ahead of us," Mr. Tanabe said Tuesday.

Mr. Tanabe and the reformists long for a chance to end the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's monopoly on power.

Critics charge that the Socialists have grown comfortable with the second place they have occupied for more than 40 years in Japanese politics.

Hideo Uchiyama, a politics expert at Tokyo's Keio University, predicts little change in the Socialist Party despite the night-victory.

"There's little chance that he'll succeed in overhauling a party set in its ways," said Mr. Uchiyama.

"His policy reforms are cosmetic and fail to introduce changes that would transform the party into an alternative ruling party."

Socialist Party leaders hope Mr. Tanabe will be able to emulate the early successes of the charismatic Mr. Doi.

In July 1989 she led the Socialists to victory in upper house polls, robbing the ruling party of a majority in that chamber for the first time since 1955.

S. Africa reportedly spent \$600m on covert operations

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The white-led government, embroiled in a crisis over the secret funding of a black political party, has spent \$600 million on covert projects since 1987, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Money from a secret budget fund was used to aid the conservative Inkatha Freedom Party, a disclosure that has damaged President F.W. de Klerk's credibility at a time when he is trying to bring all black groups together for peace talks.

Business Day, the country's leading financial daily, said money allocated to the secret services account was 380 million rand (\$140 million) this year and total 1.5 billion rand (\$600 million) since 1987.

The newspaper said the account was established in 1978 with a mandate to provide "services of a secret nature determined... as being in the national interest."

There were no details on how the money was spent. But anti-apartheid groups have repeatedly accused the government of clandestine operations ranging from political propaganda campaigns to death squads that targeted government opponents.

Mr. De Klerk's cabinet held a second day of talks Tuesday at an undisclosed location to discuss the crisis, but no statement was expected.

Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok said during the weekend that 1.75 million rand (\$700,000) was funneled to Inkatha in recent years to help the Zulu organisation publicise its opposition to international sanctions against South Africa.

The African National Congress (ANC), the leading opposition movement, says the money reveals the government's support of Inkatha and the desire to suppress other black organisations.

The ANC also says the funding supports its claim that government security forces have been assisting Inkatha in the black township fighting between the two groups that has claimed about 6,000 lives in the past five years.

Mr. De Klerk, who took office two years ago, says he ordered payments to Inkatha stopped last year following an internal investigation into covert government operations. He also called for such activities to be kept to an "absolute minimum."

But Business Day said the 380 million rand (\$140 million) approved for secret operations this year is the largest amount yet.

Mobutu names opposition leader as Zaire premier

KINSHASA, Zaire (AP) — President Mobutu Sese Seko bowed to mounting pressure for democratic change Monday by appointing one of his most outspoken critics as prime minister of a new government charged with implementing political and economic reforms.

In a brief statement broadcast on state radio and television, Mr. Mobutu said he hoped the appointment of opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi would "untangle the actual political situation in Zaire."

Mr. Tshisekedi's appointment comes after nearly 200 pro-democracy groups formed a sacred union of forces for change last week. The opposition parties joined forces after reporting that 16 people were killed in a clash between protesters and government troops. State radio said seven people died in the violence.

Monday's announcement represented a major concession by Zaire's military leader of 26 years. The opposition has accused Mr. Mobutu of stalling on a promise he made last year to introduce multiparty democracy by May 1991.

It is not known how many people have died in clashes with security forces since the pro-democracy movement sweeping

Africa began in Zaire early last year.

In the past year, there have been pro-democracy protests in Zaire and government workers have staged strikes to demand a multiparty system. Western nations have also cut aid in efforts to speed up reforms.

Mr. Mobutu said he hoped the new government under Mr. Tshisekedi would succeed where two previous governments of national unity have failed. Opposition groups refused to join those governments because they felt they were loaded with Mobutu supporters who would hinder the transition to democracy.

Mr. Mobutu said Mr. Tshisekedi has been mandated to form a government of national unity to "redress the Zairean economy and manage the political reforms necessary" for democracy.

Mr. Tshisekedi and other government opponents have accused Mr. Mobutu of stealing millions of dollars in state funds, impoverishing the country while swelling his private bank accounts abroad.

It was not immediately clear how much power Mr. Tshisekedi would wield or whether Mr. Mobutu has struck an agreement with the opposition about a national conference for democracy scheduled for July 31.

earned \$9 million from U.S. textile exports last year, about 40 percent of total exports.

Mr. Boucher said Burma's textile exports, in the absence of a quota, have decreased by 21 percent in value this year compared with the same period last year.

The administration acted under an amendment that calls for new sanctions if President George Bush certifies that Burma has not made progress on human rights or in suppressing narcotics flows.

In 1988, Burma cracked down on a pro-democracy movement and ended a programme to eradicate its opium crop. As a result, opium production has doubled to an estimated 2,250 tons, making

Burma the world's largest producer, U.S. officials said.

Politically, the Burmese military remains firmly in charge. National elections held in the spring of 1990 were won by opposition parties but the government decided to ignore the results. The number of political prisoners is believed by U.S. officials to be in the thousands. There also have been credible reports that political prisoners have been tortured, said the officials, asking not to be identified.

A U.S. development assistance programme totaling \$7 million was terminated three years ago, along with a \$5 million narcotics cooperation programme.

Over 1,000 die in battle for Sri Lankan army camp

COLOMBO (R) — More than 1,000 Sri Lankans have died in two weeks of the fiercest battles between Tamil rebels and government troops since separatists resumed fighting a year ago, a military spokesman said Tuesday.

A relief column of 2,000 soldiers found the bodies of 112 more Tamil rebels Monday when they advanced toward a strategic army camp that has been under attack for two weeks, the spokesman said.

By Monday, the death count had risen to 930 rebels and 87 soldiers, the military said.

No other details were available on Monday's clashes around the Elephant Pass army camp, the spokesman said.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas have been attacking the camp since July 10 with mortar bombs, rocket-propelled grenades and small arms.

The clashes were the fiercest since the rebels, fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east, broke off 14 months of peace talks in June, 1990.

Elephant Pass connects the northern Jaffna peninsula, a Tiger stronghold, with the rest of the island.

The attacks on Elephant Pass have eased since two crack army brigades landed on the beach at Chundiklam, 12 kilometres away, on July 14 to relieve the camp.

COLUMN

Jaguars die in Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — A pair of prized jaguars shipped to Cairo's Giza Zoo died of distemper within days of their arrival. Giza's director has said. Zookeeper Mohamed Hussein Amer said the cats had been shipped from the San Diego Zoo, but a spokeswoman for the California Zoo, Georgeanne Irvine, said it had not sent any jaguars to Cairo. Mr. Amer said the jaguars were part of an animal-exchange programme between the two zoos, organised through a German middleman whom Mr. Amer did not identify.

The Giza Zoo obtains most of its new animals through such exchanges. Mrs. Irvine said the San Diego Zoo has no exchange programme with the Giza Zoo. The male and female were about eight years old. Mr. Amer said he has no record that the century-old zoo ever has had jaguars. "The jaguars were supposed to have been vaccinated against distemper when they were born, and then once, annually. They were supposed to vaccinate them before they shipped them to Cairo. But apparently they didn't," Mr. Amer said.

The animals' health and resistance weakened on the way to Cairo. They died of distemper shortly after they arrived. "Jaguars, yellowish with black spots, range from the southwestern United States to Argentina. The species is the largest new world predatory cat. Distemper is a highly contagious viral disease that can attack the bone marrow and intestines of any cat from lion to housecat. The death rate for unvaccinated young felines is higher than 90 per cent."

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Car to cost about same as flat in Singapore

SINGAPORE (R) — Japanese cars with one litre engines will each cost \$10,000 dollars (\$28,600) in Singapore from August, about the same price for a government-built flat with two bedrooms, car dealers said. The price includes a premium which officials confirmed Tuesday would be 9,660 Singapore dollars (\$5,520), for cars with one litre or smaller engines. The government, which sets a monthly quota of between 3,000 and 4,000 cars to limit the number rolling onto Singapore's roads, holds a monthly auction for certificates of entitlement (COEs) to award the right to buy cars. The lowest successful bid becomes the COE premium. A Japanese car with 1.6 litre engine will carry a price tag of about 65,000 dollars (\$37,100), the cost of a three-bedroom flat provided by the Housing Development Board.

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Cameron, Noble tie the knot

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. (AP) — Kirk Cameron and Chelsea Noble, co-stars on the Growing Pains television comedy, have tied the knot. Hundreds of spectators and a couple of photographers tried to crash the wedding at a church in this Buffalo suburb, but 45 plainclothes security guards kept them at bay. One photographer dressed as a priest hoping to elude the guards; another tried to hide in the church's confessional. Cameron, 20, and Noble, 26, a Cheektowaga native, announced their engagement on a talk show in January.

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Dior's sumptuous line is a deja vu

PARIS — Gianfranco Ferré was true to the Dior spirit when he presented a sumptuous line of haute couture for the famed fashion house, but critics said the Italian designer was refashioning last year's hand-me-downs. Ferré, who replaced British designer Marc Bohan at Dior in 1989, has a flair for combining the fuscious elegance of expensive furs and jewelled embroidery with exotic motifs and the deep golden hues of the Orient. Evening gowns came in gold sequins, glass mirrors or voluminous folds of sea-green taffeta. The world's most beautiful models posed under gleaming spotlights in shimmering, quilted coats lined with chinchilla, or lame slacks with cuddly velvet and satin wraps. A series of camel hair ensembles and red new themes for Ferré. The atmosphere was one of wealth, glamour and luxury, but several critics stifled yawns and said Ferré's autumn winter line too closely resembled his previous collections. "You know I've seen so many of his collections, and it's just the same thing," said one fashion writer.

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